

# THE LIVING AGE.

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## COURAGE.

She has no need of sword or spear,  
 She shelters in no guarded place,  
 She watches danger drawing near,  
 And fronts it with a smiling face.

Not hers the dull, unseeing eye,  
 Blind fury, and the lust of blood,  
 Across her soul no tempests fly,  
 No passions surge in angry flood.

But clear as that great dome above  
 Which frames the sun and hides the  
 star,  
 And quiet as the words of Love  
 The motions of her spirit are.

And ever following in her train  
 Come two glad figures fair as she,  
 One with his foot on vanquished pain,  
 And one the foe of tyranny.

Where'er the sons of men are found,  
 And hearts aspire and deeds are done,  
 There Courage walks on holy ground  
 With Joy attained and Freedom won.  
*The Spectator. B. Paul Newman.*

## THE UNHEEDED.

Upon one hand your kisses chanced to  
 rest:

I smiled upon the other hand and said  
 "Poor thing," when you had gone: and  
 then in quest

Of pity rose a clamor from the dead—  
 Some way of mine, some word, some  
 look, some jest

Complained they too went all uncov-  
 ered . . .

That night I took these troubles to my  
 breast,

And played that you and I, my own,  
 were wed;

Those troubles were our child, with  
 eyes of fear,—

A wailing babe, whom I, his mother  
 dear,

Must soothe to quiet rest and calm re-  
 lief,

And urge his eyes to sleeping by and  
 by.

"O hush," I said, and wept to see such  
 grief;

"Hush, hush, your father must not  
 hear you cry."

## DREAM OF DEATH.

In sleep my idle thoughts were sadly  
 led

By wild dark ways: it strangely  
 seemed that I

Must join the number of the silent  
 dead,

And with my young and fearful  
 heart must die.

But ah, what drew my bitter moans  
 and sighs,

And pierced my sleeping spirit, was  
 that she

Who with the saddest tears would  
 close these eyes

And with maternal passion mourn  
 for me,

She on some pleasure-errand stayed  
 away.

Ah, bitter, bitter thought! Ah, lonely  
 death

To seek me in the night! And not till  
 day

Had come and soothed my fear, and  
 calmed my breath,

And in the sun my new life I could  
 kiss,

And look with prayer and hope to  
 future years,

Did I discern God's mercy still in this—  
 That I was spared the anguish of her  
 tears.

*Viola Meynell.*

## THE MOON.

Cirqued with dim stars and delicate  
 moon-flowers,

Silent she moves among the silent  
 hours—

Watching the spheres that glow with  
 golden heat

Under her feet.

Then, when the sunrise tints the east  
 with light,

She fades to westward, with the  
 dreamy night

And all her starry train—in faint dis-  
 guise

Of twilight skies.

*Hugh Austin.*

## THE FOREIGN OFFICE AUTOCRACY.

Some of us have been pointing out for some years past that the control of Parliament and the electorate over the acts of the Executive Government has been steadily weakening during the past few decades. The proposition, indeed, has become one of the commonplaces of politics; and it is hardly necessary to labor the point that in this age of what is supposed to be democracy the nation is rather less the master in its own house than it was in the periods of aristocratic and oligarchic rule. Our most vital transactions are managed for us behind closed doors by that secret committee called the Cabinet, which is supposed to be, but in a great many essential matters is not, responsible to the nation through the House of Commons.

Of how little effective value this theoretic Ministerial responsibility to Parliament may be we have examples daily. Take perhaps the most striking case of all—that of the transfer of the capital of India from Calcutta to Delhi, and the re-partition of Bengal. No more impressive change in the administrative system of one-fifth of the population of the world can be conceived; no act has ever been done in the whole course of the English domination of Southern Asia which may have more momentous results. If the people of the United Kingdom were really responsible for the destinies of the three hundred millions of Asiatics who owe allegiance to the Imperial Crown, it might be imagined that a transaction of such grave import and far-reaching consequences would have been taken only after deliberate and minute consideration by the representatives of the electorate. But, as a matter of fact, Parliament and the electorate have had no more to do with the matter than the German Reichstag

or the Russian Duma. This mighty stroke of policy is only communicated to the House of Commons when it has become a *fait accompli*, and is, in fact, irrevocable; for everybody knows that after the fiat has gone forth from the mouth of the King-Emperor himself at the Imperial Durbar, it cannot be traversed or set aside. The thing is done for good or evil. I am not here considering whether the evil or the good predominates in this epoch-marking innovation; but it is obvious that the *ex post facto* debates at Westminster can have no more effect than if they were to be held at the Oxford or Cambridge Union. It was an act of autocracy as unlimited as if it had proceeded from the Dragon Throne of China ten years ago, or from the Yildiz Kiosk before the establishment of the Turkish Constitution.

And the autocrats were a little group of statesmen and Ministers settling the whole matter in secret conclave and by the exchange of secret dispatches. It had all been arranged between Lord Hardinge and Lord Crewe, with the concurrence, one may suppose, of Mr. Asquith and Lord Morley. Whether even the Cabinet as a whole approved of the policy or was consulted about it we do not know, for in these days there is an inner council within the Cabinet itself, and not all the twenty Ministers have any real cognizance of the acts for which they are in theory collectively responsible. The Ministerial responsibility is here even more shadowy than usual. It is true papers have been presented to Parliament, and in due course it will be open to the Opposition to criticize them; but as the edict has been sent forth to India through the lips of the King himself it would not be possible to reverse it without inflicting a blow upon the prestige and

authority of the Crown, which could not be contemplated. We may be told that the Ministers who advised the Crown to take this action may be censured or punished if their policy does not meet with the approval of the House of Commons. That, as things stand, is quite meaningless; or if the proposition has any practical significance, it would imply that at the worst Lord Crewe might be driven from office by a vote of censure, which would, however, be resisted by the whole strength of the Ministerial party and its majority. In any case, since the Declaration of Delhi must be carried out, there would be little satisfaction in terminating the political career of an amiable nobleman, of whose personality the great majority of the electors have only the vaguest consciousness.

But to turn more particularly to the management of foreign affairs. Here the Executive autocracy has been steadily growing, and the control of Parliament and the nation has diminished in an equal ratio. Ninety years ago Canning wrote a dispatch to Sir Henry Wellesley, the British Ambassador at Vienna, in which he pointed out that the shaping of English foreign policy was not to be considered the affair of the Cabinet alone. Metternich had shown considerable restlessness under the criticisms levelled against him in the House of Commons, and appeared to be under the impression that these should be ignored, if not silenced, by the King's Ministers. The Ambassador was instructed to point out to the Austrian dictator that this was an entirely erroneous view of the matter:—

Our influence, if it is to be maintained abroad, must be secure in the sources of our strength at home; and the sources of that strength are in the sympathy between the people and the Government; in the union of the public sentiment with the public counsels; in the reciprocal confidence and co-opera-

tion of the House of Commons and the Crown. If Prince Metternich has taught himself to believe that the House of Commons is merely a clog and impediment to the free action of the counsellors of the Crown; that its prejudices are to be softened, its waywardness to be soothed, but that the tenor of the Government is in fact independent of its impulse—that it is, in short, to be managed, but not to be consulted—he is mistaken. It is as essential a part of the national council as it is of the national authority; and woe be to the Minister who should undertake to conduct the affairs of this country upon the principle of settling the course of its foreign policy with a Grand Alliance, and should rely upon carrying *their* decisions into effect by throwing a little dust in the eyes of the House of Commons.<sup>1</sup>

This was written in 1823—nine years before the first Reform Bill. Such were the relations of the Executive and the Legislature as they were conceived by a great Conservative Foreign Minister. A century later it sounds a strange, almost a revolutionary, doctrine that Parliament is to be consulted before Ministers enter into alliances or set the course of their policy. In practice, if not in theory, our diplomacy approaches rather more closely to the ideas of Metternich than to those of George Canning.

The question has been rendered more insistent by the progress of recent events; and many people are asking now, as some of us have been doing for a good many years past, whether the time has not come to allow the nation a little more influence than it possesses at present in the settlement, or at any rate the examination, of the most serious problems that can engage the attention of those who conduct its public affairs. It is in the department of foreign policy that the Cabinet autocracy is exhibited with the least reserve. In domestic politics, the House of Com-

<sup>1</sup> Stapleton, "George Canning and his Times," I. 377.



mons, in spite of the party system and the caucus and the existence of a drilled mechanical majority always at the disposal of Ministers, does contrive to exercise a certain influence over the processes of legislation. A Bill, if it cannot be rejected, can at least be amended, and if not amended it can be discussed in detail. The Ministry may force upon the electors a policy which they really dislike, but at any rate it cannot do so in the dark. An Insurance Bill or a Finance Bill may be unpopular or impolitic, but it is public. We know what is being done in our name, even if we are temporarily unable to prevent it.

But in foreign affairs we have not even that satisfaction. The arrangements are made in secret, and we may not learn their true character for years. We give pledges and receive them; but we do not ascertain what our commitments have been until the time comes to redeem them, it may be at an enormous cost in blood or money, and perhaps not even then. During the last few weeks the nation has discovered with surprise and the gravest anxiety that it has been on the very brink of war with the most formidable Power in the world owing to a series of engagements and agreements of which it has never been told anything save in vague and indefinite outline. We are now informed that there are no secret treaties with foreign Governments beyond those which have been recently brought to light. But for years everybody thought that such concealed conventions were in existence; and even now we are bound to assume that if there were no treaties there were at any rate understandings pledging us to burdensome responsibilities and perilous action. On any other theory our recent policy both as regards Morocco and as regards Persia is altogether inexplicable. In spite of the explanations lately given in Parliament, we are still

very much in the dark as to the transactions through which we were very nearly drawn into war to support French claims in West Africa, nor is it clear why we are enabling Russia to establish a kind of political protectorate over more than half the independent country of Persia.

The attitude which has been adopted by those who represent the British Empire in the diplomatic arena may be entirely defensible; and it is possible that if the nation were behind the scenes of the drama, the acts done in its name would receive its entire approval. But it is not behind the scenes; it is not even a spectator of the play; and it has no opportunity either of approving or condemning until it is far too late for approval or condemnation to be of the smallest practical avail. For years past it has almost abandoned its supervision over the management of its external affairs. The Opposition as a body can do little, and it is patriotically indisposed to bring to bear the party machinery when its use might weaken the hands of an Executive engaged in critical negotiations with other Governments. The principle of continuity in foreign affairs is sound; but there has been a tendency to carry it altogether beyond due limits, so that practically the Foreign Secretary becomes as independent of the critical vigilance of his opponents as he is of that of the majority of his own party. As for the private member, his opportunities in these matters are even more restricted than in other departments of policy. He can, if he pleases, put questions on the paper, but it does not follow that they will be answered; and if the Minister answers evasively or declines to answer at all on the plea that to do so would be detrimental to the national interests, the questioner is helpless. He can call attention to the subject in Committee on the Estimates, or even, if he pleases, move a regular

motion in the full House; but then, as I have pointed out elsewhere, he is always blocked by the irresistible momentum of the party apparatus. To move his motion, if he were seriously supported by his party, would be equivalent to a vote of censure. "You do not happen to approve of a particular step we have taken?" Ministers might say and practically do say to their followers. "Very well; but recollect that if you join Mr. Blank of the Opposition in saying so, we may have to go out of office, and you know what that means. How will your constituents like you to jeopardize the programme you were sent up to support because we have drawn a wrong boundary in Asia, or sacrificed some leagues of swamp and desert in Africa?"

The argument is strongest when applied to foreign policy, because here the private member has the least certainty that he is right, and that his leaders are wrong, and he knows at any rate that he would have the greatest difficulty in persuading his constituents that his motives have been patriotic and his action prudent. Besides, he is aware that it is hardly possible for him to have all the facts before him. The solemn Ministerial hint about the information which is vitally important but cannot be disclosed is one not easily waived aside. It may be, and often is, a mere pretext; but, on the other hand, it is frequently quite genuine.

In practice it comes to this: that we are almost at the mercy of two men—the Foreign Secretary and the Premier—in the domain of foreign policy. I do not, of course, overlook the fact that all serious decisions have to be taken subject to consultation and discussion with the Sovereign. The importance of this point need not be underrated. The interest of the Crown in the external policy of the Empire is acknowledged, and it is highly proba-

ble that a King of England would make a better Foreign Minister than any of his subjects. Still, an English Sovereign is only an adviser, though, of course, an adviser of the greatest weight, dignity, and influence; and in the last resort, if the Premier and Foreign Secretary choose to take the responsibility upon themselves, they can act in opposition to the deliberate opinion of the Throne. And that they do at times so act is undeniable.

The Crown is well informed but frequently powerless; the People are both powerless and ignorant. Our foreign policy goes through the strangest gyrations and convolutions, and the nation is unable to follow these manœuvres, and can only look on in dumb bewilderment, assuming that there are causes for them which it does not understand. Canning's dictum, that public opinion must be behind the policy with the Executive, is conspicuously set at naught; for public opinion is seldom tested, and owing to its want of knowledge of the facts it can rarely be formulated in any definite fashion. During the last few years we have entirely abandoned the old system of isolation, and have entered into a whole series of entangling and complicated alliances.

Whether those arrangements are really in accordance with the sentiment of the country it is quite impossible to say. The country never understood what was being done in its name until long after the event, and then it was only told that it must stand by the undertakings to which it had been committed (in the dark) by its Ministers. We have heard again and again that we are bound in honor to carry out the engagements to which we are pledged by the *Entente* with France; but to this moment we do not exactly know what those engagements are, or in what this comprehensive and indeterminate understanding has involved us. Still less do we know whether the

Ministers have been pursuing a policy which the nation (if it knew what it was) would cordially endorse. So far as we can gain fitful glimpses of the situation we gather that heavy sacrifices have been made, and the gravest risks run, in order to cultivate the closest intimacy with France.

This policy of extreme friendliness followed with curious rapidity upon one of chronic enmity and constant suspicion. The change is welcome in itself; but it is bewildering in its suddenness, and it leaves many things unexplained. At any rate, the enmity and the friendship have alike been due to executive act and inspiration. During the last two decades of the nineteenth century our statesmen were industriously engaged in quarrelling with France. To that quarrel the nation was no party. In the main it knew nothing about it, nor had it any conception of the length to which the duel of the Foreign Offices had gone, and little did it suspect that we were at times on the very edge of a rupture. It did not know that there was one day during Lord Rosebery's tenure of office when a few persons had to be confidentially warned that the issue of peace or war hung on the receipt of a conciliatory dispatch from Paris. Until nearly midnight these very well informed individuals fully believed that the world would awaken next morning to learn that England and France were at war. If that war had occurred it would have been waged on the utterly forgotten and insignificant question of the Siamese boundary. But did the British people want to go to war on the boundaries of Siam? Is there the smallest reason to suppose that if they had been consulted they would have fought France at the time on any such question?

At any rate, we have the fact that till 1900 our Governments were perpetually wrangling with France and ob-

trusively cultivating the friendship of Germany. Soon afterwards a complete change came over our Foreign Office. It threw itself effusively into the arms of the Republic, and has got upon the coldest terms, to put it mildly, with its rival. How far English opinion, as a whole, coincided with these rather remarkable divagations, whether it supported Mr. Chamberlain twelve years ago when he was urging alliance with Germany, or whether it has been in genuine sympathy with Sir Edward Grey during the past five years in which we have been cherishing the closest association with France, is a question on which no definite answer can be given. The country does not answer; it is not asked to decide these points, and Parliament is very scantily informed upon them. Everything rests upon the responsibility of Ministers, and Ministerial responsibility in the department of foreign affairs is even more of a fiction than it is elsewhere.

It must be remembered that the Foreign Secretary is in a different situation from the rest of his colleagues; not only does he direct the policy of his Department, but he personally conducts its operations. The government of this Empire by a committee of political amateurs is often defended on the ground that these same amateurs have only to decide and discuss broad questions of policy while the actual business of their departments is transacted by their professional subordinates. The First Lord of the Admiralty may be a lawyer or a wholesale stationer, but then he is not expected to take one of his Majesty's fleets into action or even to direct its training at the manoeuvres, nor does he himself prescribe the details of strategy, tactics, and discipline. These things are all managed for him by trained experts. But the Foreign Secretary is himself required to do what may be called expert work. He is not merely

the political chief of his Department, but he also takes the leading share in its technical operations. He personally performs a good deal of the active business of diplomacy. It is not the Permanent Secretary of the Foreign Office but the Minister himself who dictates the dispatches and actually conducts those confidential conversations with Ambassadors on which the course of our policy and the fate of nations may turn. Thus it would seem much more necessary in his case than in that of his colleagues that the collective control of the Cabinet should be effectively exercised upon him; whereas he is more independent than any of them, since it is rarely possible for busy politicians, much occupied with the affairs of their own offices, to follow out in detail the conduct of diplomatic proceedings.

All these considerations have led to the revival of the idea that a Foreign Affairs Committee should be appointed to discuss with the Minister the general outlines of our policy. It is some years since I put forward this suggestion, and at the time I cannot flatter myself that it was received with any particular respect; it was, indeed, regarded as little more than the amiable fantasy of a political theorist. But the progress of recent events has given the theory a very practical application. It seems doubtful whether we can justifiably leave the power to shape the destinies of one-fifth of the human race in the hands of one or two gentlemen who have risen to distinction by success in the political arena.

The Committee of Foreign Affairs is now no longer regarded as a merely academic suggestion. It has been taken up by a considerable number of practical persons, and its merits and possibilities are freely discussed. And all the arguments that could be brought forward in its favor a dozen years ago can be urged with increased validity

to-day. It can be pointed out, again, that while the direct management of foreign affairs must still remain in the hands of responsible Ministers, a larger power of supervision and information might well be entrusted to the representatives of the people in some form. In more than one country where both the general administration and the conduct of external affairs compare not unfavorably with our own, this expedient has been attempted with success. In France the Bureaux of the Chamber are almost executive bodies, and their activity and the continuity of policy they are able to promote go some way to compensate for the weakness and instability produced by frequent Ministerial changes. In America the Constitution allows the Senate the right to confirm or reject all engagements made with alien Powers, and this in practice gives it a rather wide, if somewhat loose and indefinite, control over the foreign policy of the Republic. The Committee on Foreign Relations may not be able to shape the policy pursued by the President, but it is, at any rate, regularly informed as to any important step contemplated by the Executive. It sits with closed doors, and its debates are, even in that country of an omnipresent Press, never prematurely communicated to the newspapers. It can, if it thinks proper, remonstrate with the President when it considers that the State Department is engaged on an impolitic or injudicious course of action; and as the American Constitution requires that all treaties and international conventions must be ratified by the Senate, it is necessary that this Chamber should be fully informed of their purport and meaning before such agreements can be provisionally concluded by the Government. "The Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations is in frequent communication with the President. He can give the Chief of the State a pretty

shrewd idea as to whether a particular arrangement is likely to be accepted by the Senate, and he can tell him what modifications will be required if it is to be confirmed."

There is a good deal to be said for constituting a similar Committee on Foreign Relations in the Imperial Parliament. There might be one for the House of Commons and one for the House of Lords; but probably the better arrangement would be to form a joint Committee selected from the two Houses. The Committee should be a small one, say twenty members, of whom twelve might be chosen from the Lower Chamber and eight from the Upper. It would include, of course, members of both parties, and would be appointed, not for the session, but for the duration of the Parliament. It would not be in any sense an executive body; that is to say, it would not be supposed to take the conduct of foreign affairs out of the hands of the Cabinet. Its functions would be to advise, to discuss, to investigate, and generally to act as the eyes and ears of Parliament where its particular department was concerned. It would have power to call for papers, documents, correspondence, and drafts of conventions and agreements with foreign States before these were laid upon the table of the House; and it would be entitled to request the Secretary of State, or his immediate subordinate, to explain the details of the policy which the Ministry proposed to pursue.

The Cabinet would be under no compulsion to adopt the views of the Foreign Affairs Committee; its functions would be merely advisory, and its advice might be rejected. But when Ministers differed from the Committee they would do so under a grave sense of responsibility, for they would have the full knowledge that this weighty little council, composed of the most competent and influential private members

of both Chambers, was against them. And Parliament and the country would have more confidence in the conduct of the most critical department of State if they knew that its intricate and mysterious recesses (necessarily mysterious so far as the mass of the public is concerned) had been explored by a comparatively impartial and reasonably well-informed body of investigators.

We may go further and suggest that no treaty or convention with a foreign Government should take effect until it has been ratified by Parliament. We do not want to conduct delicate negotiations with the blinds up and the windows open; but before the nation is irretrievably committed it ought to know what has been done and how far it is pledged. The processes of diplomacy must usually be conducted in private, but the results should be made public. Our Ministers could not be expected to negotiate on equal terms with the representatives of foreign Governments if their transactions had to be revealed at every stage to Parliament and the newspapers. No reasonable person wants our Foreign Office to play with all the cards on the table for the inspection of rivals and adversaries as well as friends. But all the same, we are far too much under the eighteenth-century tradition of mystification and intrigue in the domain of foreign affairs, and we still keep too close to the methods which prevailed when wars and alliances were made in the closets of sovereigns, by royal favorites and potent Ministers dependent on the throne. Popular government has never really acquired control of this region, and it is perhaps time it did. No doubt our diplomatists would sometimes find themselves at a disadvantage if they could never enter into secret understandings; but that is a disadvantage which must be accepted. Speaking broadly, one is inclined to say that a



treaty which cannot be disclosed is a treaty which ought not to be made; and that a nation at our present stage

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of political development has no right to conclude agreements which it cannot avow even to itself.

Sidney Low.

## IS M. MAETERLINCK CRITICALLY ESTIMATED?

M. Maurice Maeterlinck is undoubtedly a great name. He is universally known, and thousands of men and women who think of him as a writer of genius revere him also as a sage and even a saint. Probably the immense majority of his readers will welcome the news that he has been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature as unquestioningly as if he were the only living man to provide moral guidance as well as high artistic pleasure for his generation. He is, of all our contemporaries, the one who, for causes we shall have to hint, has been the luckiest in evading critical examination; and it seems, therefore, the more advisable to give him at this crowning point of his life all the attention which exceptional success invites, whether it be merited or not.

In my opinion M. Maeterlinck is enormously overrated. It is not easy within the limits of an article to state in detail all the reasons I have for thinking so; a lecturer with two hours at his disposal and the possibility of quoting freely from the books would do it better than a writer; but it will not be difficult to indicate briefly those limitations of M. Maeterlinck of which I have little doubt that a great many reflective readers are more or less conscious.

It is the privilege of those who write about morals and the conduct of life that their admirers seldom take the trouble or even feel the inclination to view their career and works critically. Who cares to know much about Emerson? Even those who feel the charm of the *Imitation of Christ* most

keenly do not take as much interest in a discussion about the authorship of their favorite book as in a review of the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy. There are men—Balzac, Victor Hugo, Dickens, Tolstoi—with an output four times as considerable as that of M. Maeterlinck, about whose literary development the average reader is much clearer than about the latter's. To most people M. Maeterlinck is only a respected name, or the author of books from which somebody they know declares he derives incredible comfort, or the writer to whom editors apply when they want an article on Death. He is chiefly regarded as a philosopher. Those who know him under that aspect seldom go any further. Whether he is young or old, French or Belgian, rich or poor, lucky or brave, how he started in life and literature—none of these questions concerns them very much. They like to hear that he is fond of bees, because the notion goes well with the idea we form of a wise man, and applies as well to the old man of Tarentum as to Sir John Lubbock; but when they are reminded that he has recently made a tremendous success with a play, they are puzzled and have to tell themselves that the play, as far as they know, is full of the deepest symbolism. If you were to tell them that at the age of twenty-seven M. Maeterlinck was an exclusively literary man, who sought his way, as the phrase goes, somewhat restlessly, in fiction, in light comedy, and in decadent verse—to-day perfectly impossible to wade through in the first volume he ever got printed, *Serres Chaudees*; that

his first great success was a drama, and that his first philosophical book, *Le Trésor des Humbles*, was dedicated to an actress, they would be decidedly startled, and would implore you to reconcile these incongruities for them. Yet all this is true; M. Maeterlinck had literary before he had philosophical ambitions, and if M. Octave Mirbeau had not awakened the world to the merits of *La Princesse Maleine*, by proclaiming it "a drama comparable and even superior to the best things of Shakespeare," it is probable that *Le Trésor des Humbles*, unhelped by the plays, would have remained among the mass of unread philosophy. M. Maeterlinck was thirty-four when that first attempt at moralizing appeared. It is exactly the time in the lives of literary men when notoriety—more capricious than fame—hesitates whether it will lift them up to the highest rank or settle them for ever in the second. If M. Maeterlinck's lighter Muse had not at that critical juncture drawn attention to her severer sister, in all likelihood I should not be writing the present article. But how many of M. Maeterlinck's admirers are aware of this? Nineteen in twenty take him wholesale, as we take a force of nature.

In spite of this pre-eminence of the literary side in M. Maeterlinck's composition and career, I will limit myself to a discussion of the character and place in the world of M. Maeterlinck's philosophy. My present purpose is merely to help the reader in distinguishing two elements in him, and seeing whether one of these deserves the estimation which seems to be generally accepted among a certain portion of the public. I am afraid this examination has never been made with the sincerity and fearlessness which, along with intelligence and sympathy, are the essentials of criticism. So we have to place ourselves calmly before the facts.

The first question we have to ask ourselves ought naturally to be: Does M. Maeterlinck really bear in the world the part of a great sage? We feel at once confusedly but forcibly that he is not one of those men whose presence is the salt of the earth. How many degrees could we not count between him and a Confucius, for instance? The mere idea of a comparison between him and a man of that height is so ridiculous as to be really unjust, and we must give it up at once. But besides the great sages who have been great saints, there is another class of men whom we may call, with various nuances, seers, prophets, theologians, or philosophers. These men seldom do but they often see great things. They were numerous in that most intellectual milieu, the Greek civilization. Socrates, though he talks too much, is almost a saint, but Plato is a great theologian, and Plotinus a seer of the type we have in view. With due differences a man like Coleridge—whom M. Maeterlinck has read—or even a man like our Diderot, should be placed in the same class. Charity does not devour them; but their inner light makes not only for comprehension but for improvement. It is evidently beside the men in this second class that a writer who, like M. Maeterlinck, has devoted most of his life to mere literature and to the stage has to be ranked. But here, again, the moment we name men at all exceptional—let us think of Coleridge once more—he shrinks terribly. The characteristic of these intellectual seers, as well as that of most mystics, is that within certain limits their light never wavers. They often repeat the same things, but in indefinitely varied expressions, and each expression strikes us as fraught with the possibility of endless development and renewing. All these seers could appropriate the simple confession of Mme. Guyon to Fénelon: "I could

write for ever if my hand did not ache"; or that of Lamartine, to a friend: "I never have to think; my thoughts think themselves."

It is not so with M. Maeterlinck. If he had been possessed of this consuming but never consumed light, the few hundred pages he has devoted to the conduct of life would not have satisfied—that is to say, exhausted—his longing to make men better. Real sages do not wait till they are twenty-eight to exchange trifling for wisdom, and do not desert wisdom long before they are forty to revert to pretty writing. Seek one in the history of nations who left a mark on the souls of men after acting so amateurishly, you will not find him. You will not find one either, no matter how inexperienced in the art of writing, no matter how abstruse, no matter even how remote from us by atmosphere and language, who can be taxed with vagueness. Their passionate desire to influence their neighbor for good inevitably results in clarity, were it the clarity of parables. Now, read all the critics favorable to M. Maeterlinck, they will uniformly tell you that his doctrine is difficult to sum up or even to reduce to principles; they will say that the only way of feeling its charm—charm is the phrase they always use, not virtue—is to read the books in their entirety without trying to condense their meaning. A terrible verdict lies under those formulas generally indicative of intimidation. When there is charm in a work—and I am by no means prepared to refuse charm to M. Maeterlinck's philosophical productions—but at the same time the elusiveness which baffles intelligence in this way, we are sure that the charm is more that of the garment than that of the body; there is more in it that is verbal—and almost inevitably verbose—than there is substance; the thought is rather feminine than the reverse, and we can predict with cer-

tainty its speedy exhaustion if some foreign element does not restore its vitality.

In fact, M. Maeterlinck's philosophical works—the most successful one *Le Trésor des Humbles* especially—are distinctly unphilosophical and no less distinctly literary. Let me warn the reader that I am taking the latter term in its recent and uncomplimentary acceptance—that is to say, undue attention to effect and predominance of manner over matter. Taken as a whole, the books look terribly what they really are—the work of a young and very immature mind. Let anybody take up those essays—mostly published in small magazines—without being told about the present reputation of their author; if he has the least knowledge of what manly thinking and forcible writing means, he will be struck by the pleasure M. Maeterlinck takes in stringing words together, and by his indifference to the development of the idea from which he originally started. I have not the least doubt that M. Maeterlinck, who has since learned to write perfectly clearly, must be aware of this very unphilosophical fault, and perhaps uncomfortably conscious of the blindness of so many of his readers to it.

Here are a few instances:

The chapter on Ruysbroeck in *Le Trésor des Humbles* is a good one to begin with. It is a perfect nightmare, the second part being absolutely irreconcilable with the first, and hundreds of incoherent metaphors making it the more evident that the author did not know his own meaning.

Or take this definition of wisdom in *La Sagesse et la Destinée*, which ought to be one of the outstanding and consequently clearest parts of the book:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "*La Sagesse et la Destinée*," xxiv. I quote it in French as translators have an inevitable tendency to clarify the text they are translating, and also because the graphic English language has a curious way of improving the style of M. Maeterlinck. Further on, when I try to get at the author's real thought, I shall quote him in English.

Mais qu'est-ce enfin que cette sagesse dont nous parlons ainsi? N'essayons pas de la définir trop strictement, car ce serait l'emprisonner. Tous ceux qui le tentèrent font songer à un homme qui éteindrait d'abord une lumière afin d'étudier la nature même de la lumière. Il ne trouvera jamais qu'une mèche noircie et des cendres.

"Le mot sage," observe Joubert, "le mot sage dit à un enfant est un mot qu'il comprend toujours et qu'on ne lui explique jamais." Acceptons-le comme l'accepte l'enfant, afin qu'il grandisse en même temps que nous. Disons de la sagesse ce que Sœur Hadewyck, l'ennemie mystérieuse de Ruysbroeck l'Admirable, dit de l'amour: "Son plus profond abîme est sa plus belle forme." Il ne faut pas que la sagesse ait une forme; il faut que sa beauté soit aussi variable que la beauté des flammes. Ce n'est pas une déesse immobile, éternellement assise sur un trône. C'est Minerve qui nous accompagne, qui monte et qui descend, qui pleure et qui joue avec nous. Vous n'êtes vraiment sage que si votre sagesse se transforme sans cesse de votre enfance à votre mort. Plus le sens que vous attachez au mot sage devient beau et profond, plus vous devenez sage; et chaque degré que l'on gravit en s'élevant vers la sagesse augmente aux yeux de l'âme l'étendue que la sagesse ne pourra jamais parcourir.

This is the oracle. Have we to do with a Persian sophist, who takes perverse pleasure in misleading those who ask him questions, or have we come hungry and thirsty to a man who can give us food and drink? The question which M. Maeterlinck answers in this page is, after all, the same which was asked of Christ: "Good master, what good things shall I do that I may have eternal life?" Compare the plainness of the Divine answer with these conflicting metaphors, these bewildering quotations pretending to be illuminating, this exasperating jumping from Ay to Nay ("its deepest abyss is its most beautiful form," followed with "wisdom must not have a form"), this con-

catenation of nothingness ending in the tritest platitude: "The more beautiful and profound is the meaning you attach to the word wise, the wiser you become." But the rhythm of this short chapter is admirable; and if there happened to be sense under the sounds it would be an excellent piece of writing.

It would be worth while, too, to make a careful study of the most famous chapter in *Le Trésor des Humbles*, on "La Vie Profonde," which is said to hold the kernel of M. Maeterlinck's philosophy. But we should suppose this study made by a mind accustomed to solid realities, or, above all, by a mind in sorrow or doubt and looking for effective help. The subject of the chapter is stated clearly. It is the possibility for even the humblest of men to make their life high and beautiful—a commonplace in all the spiritual books and the A B C of Christian life. How are we to realize this possibility? By finding a superior life in the humble and inevitable everyday reality, answers M. Maeterlinck, very clearly and sensibly—that is to say, by becoming conscious of our relations with the infinite. But how are we to become thus conscious? We become conscious of that relation—

on a day when the sky opens of itself, and from that moment dates the real spiritual individuality of our being. But with most men the sky opens so by mere chance. They are born of an accidental joy or sorrow, terror or thought.

So far so good, though we already feel the approach of the formidable flood of metaphors. It bursts upon us when we want to hear more about the conditions in which that spiritual birth takes place. Here is the enumeration:

Some find out unexpectedly that they are not alone under the sky; others, while giving a kiss or dropping a tear, suddenly discover "that the spring of

all that is best and holiest from the universe to God (?) is concealed behind a night full of stars too remote"; another has seen a Divine hand stretching between his joy and sorrow; another, again, has realized that the dead are right.

These are the statements with which we have to content ourselves. They lack precision, to be sure, but we see their drift all the same—viz. stupendous revelations like those enumerated above are not necessary to our spiritual birth:

The wise man has no need of such violent awakenings. He watches a tear, the gesture of a virgin, a drop of water in its fall; he listens to a wafted thought, shakes the hand of a brother, draws near a lip with open eyes and with his soul open too. On it he can see uninterruptedly that which you have only caught a glimpse of, and a smile will teach him easily what a tempest or the very hand of death had to reveal to you.

This is what the wise man does. He sees the truth in a smile and on a lip, in a wafted thought, in a gesture, in a drop of water, above all in a tear—oh, in a tear, one of those tears, those idle tears, with which almost every page of M. Maeterlinck is bedewed—but he is a very wise man, no doubt; and we foolish creatures who are, after all, as honestly as himself in quest of wisdom, how are we to get at it? Here, perhaps, comes the answer:

If you have loved deeply, you have had need of no one to point out to you that your soul was as wide a thing as the world; that the stars, the flowers, the waves of the night and those of the sea are not solitary; that nothing ends and everything begins on the threshold of appearances; that the very lips you have kissed belonged to a being much higher, more beautiful and pure than the woman you clasped in your arms.

Yes, yes, no doubt; but suppose one is not in love:

If you do not love, or if you are not loved, but can, however, see with a certain force that millions of things are beautiful and the soul is great and life earnest almost (?) unspeakably, is it not as beautiful as if you loved or were loved? And if the sky itself is hidden from you, does not the wide starry sky spread all the same over your soul in the shape of death? All that happens to us is divinely great. But we ought to accustom ourselves to live as an angel just born, or a woman in love, or a man at the point of death.

That is the answer. It takes a certain force, as M. Maeterlinck says, to resist a great temptation to show up its ridiculous side and pass on. But we had better try to the end to elucidate rather than mock. This farrago means that the true way of raising our life above its poor level is to open our eyes with the freshness of "an angel just born" to the beauty of the world. Humble man, it says, if thou desirest to rise above thy petty self, the method is easy; thou hast only to be a genius.

Is this the advice of a moralist or the fun of the Eastern sophist? Neither. It is nothing more than the rhetoric of an ill-advised youth playing at writing philosophy. Read the rest of the essay: you will find that the second part contradicts the first with great serenity, and can be summed up in one comforting but somewhat unexpected sentence: "Those who think of nothing possess the same truth as those who think of God." Words, words, words.

There is something humiliating in the sort of *ex professo* refutation or exposition I have just made of this so-called celebrated chapter. It seems as if one ought only to say: Read for yourself and see whether it is not through a gigantic farce that M. Maeterlinck has ever been regarded as an eminent moral guide. But the power of opinion, the tyranny of Doxa is so great, that an affirmation of that kind would leave in doubt many who could not read for



themselves, and I do not regret the trouble I have taken.

I am persuaded that whoever can read a book with an alert mind will never look into M. Maeterlinck's without realizing the hopeless emptiness of what people call his philosophy; but I do not flatter myself that I am able to convince everybody. With the millions, the objection invariably made by people who will not think for themselves will still be raised: "You say that the literary success of M. Maeterlinck is responsible for his reputation as a philosopher, but how do you account for the belief which thousands and thousands retain in his philosophy? There must be more in it than you say."

Certainly the phenomenon of M. Maeterlinck's nominal and numerical influence exists, and we cannot disregard it; but we can easily qualify it at once. Does M. Maeterlinck influence those who count or those who do not?

This is an all-important question, the answer to which ought to be decisive in our examination of M. Maeterlinck's place in the world. Certainly there have been men who had to wait long for recognition. But those men lived unknown, and their books were unread. There is no example of a writer popular with the unprofessional and neglected by the learned in his lifetime, who, after his death, rose to the first rank in the estimation of the latter. One has never heard of a philosophy which, after first delighting the man in the street, ultimately forced itself upon the admiration of more vigorous intellects. Contrast the attention given to the doctrine of M. Bergson, for instance, with that given to M. Maeterlinck. You may think with awe—if you are easily awed—of the army of men and women who devoutly keep M. Maeterlinck's books on their shelves, you will not be able to bring in one really great name in support of his phil-

osophical fame. Read the Maeterlinckian bibliography—one of those displays which go far to keep the timid in bondage; you will notice at once, first of all, that French names are remarkably scarce in it, and in the second place that not one first-rate critic appears in the list. You will, it is true, discover the names of Jules Lemaitre and Mr. Archer among an ocean of nobodies, but Mr. Archer as well as M. Lemaitre have only concerned themselves with M. Maeterlinck as a playwright, and ignore him as a philosopher.

In fact, the success of M. Maeterlinck's philosophical books is of exactly the same order as the success of any second-rate novel or drama, and can be accounted for by very similar causes. There is, I am only too glad to admit, in *La Sagesse et la Destinée* one idea which has been helpful to many discouraged souls—though why they should have waited to find it there I cannot conceive; it is the notion that Destiny is only a word, and that our free will can insert causes of its own in the so-called chain of fatality—the world-old idea of which the French proverb "Aide-toi, le Ciel t'aidera," is only a variant—but it is not the chief cause of M. Maeterlinck's influence. That cause lies in the snobbishness of the crowd—I mean the reading, not the working, crowd—and in its susceptibility to the cheap advantages which make so many commonplace though apparently distinguished preachers successful. M. Maeterlinck is far from having a sound philosophical grounding; even in easier provinces he is content with little, and his study of Emily Brontë, for instance, is a monument of superficiality; but he makes a tremendous display of philosophical erudition, and that invariably dazzles the uneducated. He thinks the *Biographia Literaria* an exceptionally abstruse work, but he quotes off-hand from

Plotinus' *Enneads*. Just because he has translated Ruysbroeck, and put prefaces to translations of Novalis and Emerson, people regard him reverently as a specialist in mystics, and hardly dare look up to a man who lives on such heights. Add that the reflection of his real on his imaginary merits comes into play here as everywhere, and that a man who knows so much about bees cannot be ignorant in any realm.

Besides this cause there exists another which I think even more active. One cannot exaggerate the sensitiveness of the class of readers whom M. Maeterlinck chiefly reaches to the outward qualities of style. Even in his best, I should say, his prettiest books, even in *La Vie des Abeilles*, M. Maeterlinck is not a great artist in words. He is far too conscious of style, and the consequence is that we are conscious of it too, and our pleasure loses proportionately. But he has one quality not unfrequent in writers endowed with more artistic ambition than artistic capacity, and which would ultimately make them really great writers if we had three lives to grow in instead of one. It is a pleasure in writing which gives them a sort of sincerity even where they are insincere, and which may well cause irritation to an experienced reader but only delights an inexperienced one. It is an attitude, often a pose, but it engenders a certain unity which results in rhythm, and rhythm, no doubt, is one of the true writer's virtues. That rhythm in M. Maeterlinck's philosophical books belongs to words rather than thought, which stamps it at once with inferiority. Yet it is there all the same, and acts so powerfully on most readers as to influence them as if they had read quite a different book. It is like the delivery which positively transforms certain speeches.

Take that poor string of youthful es-

says, *Le Trésor des Humbles*. The quality I am speaking of appears in the very title. It is only one of those numberless pretty titles which lady writers will often discover more easily than the greatest artists: but who will deny the power of a title? Two words on the back of a book which we do not even open will tune our soul for hours to a mood, or start a train of thought which many a lecture could not create. What we hear, read, or even do matters little in that fascinating condition. *Le Trésor des Humbles* is one of those titles. It is a poem in itself. Those simple but rich syllables speak of hidden life cheerfully accepted, of the fraternity of the poor and lowly who envy not the rich, and would rather keep together close enough to be warm—as Renan says of the *collegia funeraria*—of Patience and her inexhaustible treasures. That title is poetical and true, happy and courageous, philosophical and Christian. How many poor souls must have longed for the pages it promises! Now supposing you know nothing about M. Maeterlinck except that he is a famous man: if you open the book in the mood thus conjured, the display of recondite erudition, the vagueness of the doctrine, the metaphors both familiar and yet apparently new, the subdued tone of speech as if the author's voice were full of suppressed sighs, the lulling rhythm of page after page, along with the sober philosophical attitude implied throughout, will caress and soothe you so much that you may remain to the last under the initial spell of the title, imagining all the time that the author must preach that which you expected from him, and putting down inconsistencies to your lack of familiarity with such difficult pursuits. M. Maeterlinck's prose acts like music, quite independently from thought and meaning: it can be made to say as many things as the bells.

Were it not for this harmonious vagueness there is little doubt that M. Maeterlinck's books would be less popular than they are, even with the many women and the comparatively few men who at present dote upon them. The doctrine they hold, so to speak in solution, would appear too negative, and in some cases too remote from what we call morals to appeal to thousands who in its poetical presentment cannot see it clearly.

What are in fact the distinctly Maeterlinckian doctrines, those which M. Maeterlinck never succeeded in expounding in a satisfactory manner in his books, but which, however, are his doctrines? I am afraid they are clearer to those who are not enthusiastic about M. Maeterlinck than to his admirers.

There is, first of all, what some call the philosophy of the soul, the not very healthy spiritualism diffused through several chapters of *Le Trésor des Humbles*, especially those entitled "Le Réveil de l'Âme," "Silence," and "Le Tragique Quotidien," and embodied in most of the writer's plays. Although M. Maeterlinck's philosophy—I mean M. Maeterlinck's philosophical reading—is chiefly Monistic and of poor quality, it coexists in his mind with the highest notion of the influence of the soul. It would be useless to try and imagine any metaphysics based upon the idea. M. Maeterlinck is nothing more than a spiritualist in the ordinary sense of the word—a man who believes in soul communication apart from the language. In *Le Trésor des Humbles* he prophesied the almost immediate liberation of the soul from the trammels of language, and the beginning of her reign throughout the establishment of silence. Mutual comprehension and mutual love in the whole universe were to follow. Needless to say that this prophecy was a very young man's dream and probably talk. The realm of the soul, to-day as then, remains

confined to the dark rooms in which spirits play in curtains or at best bring you roses.

Then, there is the doctrine of accepted humility, which appears everywhere in *Le Trésor des Humbles*, and, strangely enough, appears pretty often in *La Sagesse et la Destinée* as well. Everybody can be great and good—in fact, is great and good. We are told not to despise ourselves even if we are conscious of grief at our neighbor's happiness, and encouraged to think, conversely, that the sister of charity who catches typhus at a bedside may have a shabby, vindictive soul.

Finally, clad in thousands of metaphors throughout *La Sagesse et la Destinée*, comes the Ibsenian teaching of self-realization. Self-denial is an absurdity, happiness is a duty.

These are the Maeterlinckian doctrines, or at any rate, the tentatively expressed Maeterlinckian tendencies; nothing very novel, to be sure. Now, I do not think that if all this were clearly instead of vaguely put it would be agreeable to three in ten of M. Maeterlinck's devoted readers. A moral philosophy in which God is only a name, from which the notion of immortality and that of self-sacrifice are absent, and through which the anarchism inherent in the search for happiness at all costs is on the contrary omnipresent, only appeals to the unhappy few. And those few will not tarry long in the Maeterlinckian groves where every rivulet is swollen with tears: they will laugh at all this namby-paminess and go straight to Nietzsche.

So there will remain only the devotees of the soul and mysteriousness, and those of humility. A small band that of the former. When you have tried a few times to live in your body as a snail in its shell, occasionally putting out a feeler into infinity and drawing back home with such illuminating certitudes as the following: "I am

alive—I am myself and not anybody else—the world exists—how strange it all is!" the art of thinking latent in *Le Trésor des Humbles* appears really too like a joke. It would be delightful to retain a child's power of wonderment in a man's intelligence, but the power alone is no treasure.

The lovers of humility are more numerous, as most men, as they get on in life, become more or less conscious of failure. A not inconsiderable part of M. Maeterlinck's adherents come to him in hopes of healing intellectual or even literary disappointment. Their soreness feels soothed by his encouragement—no matter how frigid sometimes, and unsympathetic, and aloof—and his obscurity suits their own incapacity to be clear.

But the immense majority of M. Maeterlinck's anonymous disciples belongs to the army of men and women—mostly women—who long for an ideal yet never succeed in formulating it; who would like to be great morally, yet feel confusedly that they will never have sufficient energy for the fights in which moral greatness is acquired; above all, who have neither the stamina nor the hardness implied in resolute Ibsenism; they are mildly selfish and mildly loving, and the wishy-washy egotism and pity mixed up in about equal proportions in the Maeterlinckian creed find in them a ready response. *Le Trésor des Humbles* and *La Sagesse et la Destinée* make them feel good without enforcing real goodness upon them. Those books produce hypocrites, but hypocrites under chloroform, or I should say under opium, who have no unpleasant consciousness. This accounts for the comparative non-recognition of M. Maeterlinck in France. The French are learning hypocrisy, no doubt, but their chief fault is still cynicism, which is far superior. You will only find Maeterlinckian French among either deteriorated Tolstoists, who were

deteriorated Catholics before being that, or among the worldlings with whose fathers and mothers unbelief was a fashion, as some sort of belief is a fashion with themselves. The real Maeterlinckian world consists of English and American dissenters whom Calvinism has bruised more or less, or of Church of England people who have been staggered by higher criticism in the third solution; above all, of vaguely metaphysical Germans, and of Swedes possessed of that ultra-refined *Sehnsucht* which they call *langta*. One may add a sprinkling of those omnivorous readers whose husbands talk Greek, Armenian, or Turkish, but who invariably choose to dream in French. Maeterlinckianism never thrives where there is manliness or warmth; it is never productive of anything strong and great. Wherever you find apparent exceptions you will have no difficulty in discovering that either the doctrine is not understood or some stronger creed underlies it.

If I had more space I would like to point out in M. Maeterlinck's composition and in his works a markedly sensuous streak which his admirers do not seem consciously to notice, but which no veil of metaphors can conceal. He makes constant references to love, and sometimes it would seem to be the purest and most ethereal kind of love; but in the books as in the play we see Monna Vanna too plainly beneath her cloak. There are too many women in M. Maeterlinck's philosophies—too much flitting from one to the other; too many amorous meetings in his azure blue amidst the shower of "stars too remote." Free love, no matter how sidereally hinted at, will be terrestrial; its introduction in spiritual books shows the progress we have made since a soldierly uncle of Madame de Sévigné's defined good books as those which teach us to live purely and die bravely.

To conclude, M. Maeterlinck is neither by his method of writing, nor by his ideas, nor by the effects of these ideas, anything like an apostle or a sage. He is most distinctly a literary man, and, as the reader must have seen for himself, a literary man of no superior degree.<sup>2</sup> There never is literary excellence where there is not moral or intellectual superiority to begin with. As long as we try to conceive M. Maeterlinck as the philosopher many believe him to be, we are landed upon insuperable difficulties. The moment, on the contrary, we begin to view him as a modern literary man with the literary fault of preferring manner to matter, appearances to reality, everything becomes clear, consistent, and I had almost said right. His easy comfortable life in the three homes he possesses in Paris, Nice, and Normandy,<sup>3</sup> which is not reconcilable with our present prejudices about the true preacher's background; the taste for theatricals which he seems to have in common with his wife; his indifference, or at least his apparent indifference, to the burning questions of the day; his partiality for studious leisure, are all characteristic of the literary temperament, and all healthy and right in a literary man who has attained to fame and competence. This view once admitted, M. Maeterlinck's philosophical books immediately appear in their proper perspective, as a not very considerable part of his works to which

<sup>2</sup> In the first editions of his well-known "Histoire de la Littérature Française," M. Lanson, of the Sorbonne, only mentioned M. Maeterlinck in a foot-note in which he described his style as 'complicated, contorted, and naively pretentious'; in the later editions that note has been suppressed and the name of M. Maeterlinck merely appears in a list of Belgian writers between M. Mokel and M. Rodenbach.

<sup>3</sup> Many people, among whom I am, do not forgive M. Maeterlinck his indelicacy in occupying so soon after its consecration the property of the Benedictines at St. Wandrille. There is something shocking in having dramas performed in the cloister so recently the legal possession of that great and good monk, the restorer of plain-chant, Dom Pothier.

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he devoted some of his 'prentice years, and from which he turned long before forty. The crudities of all sorts with which those books abound cease to irritate, and appear only natural in such tentative work.

M. Maeterlinck is no powerful intellect certainly: his characteristic is rather subtlety almost invariably far-fetched. But he does not lack judgment by any means, and his development has been in the logical direction. I feel pretty certain that in so far as a writer can judge his own productions, he judges *Le Trésor des Humbles* and *La Sagesse et la Destinée* more like their few critics than their many admirers. He must know he is no philosopher. He speaks somewhere in *La Vie des Abeilles* of the bliss of saying true, after long saying pleasant things. This may amount to a confession.

I spoke above of the gigantic farce of his reputation as a spiritual guide. It is only fair to say that he has been no party to it. He does not advertise himself, and probably suffers from somebody else's self-advertising—he never forces himself on public attention. I should not be surprised if the apparent luck of his philosophical volumes caused him more annoyance than satisfaction. More uneasiness, too, for he must know that of the author of *Le Trésor des Humbles* nothing will remain, and that what might be saved of the author of *La Vie des Abeilles*, *Le Double Jardin*, and *Intérieur* runs considerable risk of perishing in the destruction. Perhaps his secret desire would have been that the judges who awarded him the Nobel Prize should have stated clearly that it was not the philosopher but the poet in him they thought worthy of this rare distinction. Unfortunately, a Nobel judge is no Osiris, and a mistake which has lasted almost twenty years can only be corrected by posterity.

Ernest Dimnet.



## THE LANTERN BEARERS.

BY MRS. ALFRED SIDGWICK, AUTHOR OF "THE SEVERINS," ETC.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

When Helga arrived at the back door of Brendon House next day she found three women in the kitchen, an elderly one who was cooking the dinner, a beady-eyed one who was writing letters, and the damsel who had let her in yesterday. This last one took Helga in hand and introduced her to Mrs. Johnson at the fire and Miss Pratt at the side-table.

"My name is Delorme," she said in a tone of defiance. Helga did not understand. "Elvira Delorme. I'm acting as parlormaid just at present because I thought I'd try the life. But I don't care for it. I'm going to train as a nurse instead. P'raps you'd better come and see your pantry. The old cat's always worrying about her glass and silver. You'll find out."

Helga followed her instructress into the pantry, and when she saw the glass and silver all her sympathies were with the old cat. The glass looked as if it had been out in a fog, and the silver as if it had been washed in bacon fat. Miss Delorme sank into the only chair and looked up and down her new assistant.

"Ever tried this job before?" she asked.

"No," said Helga.

"Well, I'm sick of it," said Miss Delorme. "I've stood it here two months, and that's longer than most."

"Why?" asked Helga, looking round with surprise and impatience at the dirty, untidy place in Miss Delorme's charge.

"Because they're fidgets and mean. I've known the old one see a tin of apricots opened and count the bits. What do you say to that? Just because we'd 'ad a few out of the last tin."

"Shall I wash these forks and

spoons?" said Helga, who hoped there would not be time and opportunity for many confidences of this kind.

"You can wash 'em after dinner, when they're dirty," said Miss Delorme, looking rather offended. "They're ready to go up now. She says you've never waited at table."

"Is it difficult?" asked Helga.

"Not if you've been used to good waiting in your own 'ome."

"I haven't been used to any waiting. We keep no servant."

"Oh, indeed!" said Miss Delorme. "I thought you were a lady."

There was an awkward pause. "My father keeps his own dog-cart," Miss Delorme continued. "I miss it terribly here. I 'ate walking. It's so plebeian. Miss Stair had a car, but she's sold it. She isn't here much."

"Whose plate-powder do you use?" asked Helga, her fascinated eyes still busy with the greasy forks and spoons.

"None at all lately," said Miss Delorme. "It's finished, and I haven't bothered to ask for more. You can get the tray ready for dinner now, if you like."

"How many?"

"Two. The old cat and the young one. The young one's the worst of the two. It was her who drove me to give notice. Actshally gave me back a glass and said she couldn't drink out of it."

Helga counted out her forks and spoons and hoped that Mrs. Johnson and Miss Pratt were not like Miss Delorme. As she was getting the tray ready a bell rang, and Miss Delorme yawned.

"Is that for one of us?" said Helga, anxiously.

"No 'urry," said Miss Delorme. "It's the young one, expects me to 'elp her dress. I always lets her ring twice.

She used to keep a French maid, and what I say is, let her keep one again. I wouldn't mind. I learned French at school. There! Now I'm off. I'll be back in ten minutes and show you how to lay a cloth. I've been studying your face, and I think you'd pass in a crowd, if you did your 'air smarter. Some day I'll do it for you, as I do my own."

Helga hoped not, but said nothing. The moment she was left alone she made bold and did what needed doing. She found a grimy enamel bowl, washed it well, and then washed the glass and silver. She could not start till she had asked Miss Pratt for a little soap and soda, and she could not finish to her satisfaction because there were no clean dry cloths and no leather. While she hurriedly did the best she could Miss Pratt sat down in the pantry and talked to her. She told Helga that Miss Delorme's real name was Eliza Dobbs and that her father kept a public-house, and that she had a sister on the stage under the name of Gladys Delorme. Mrs. Johnson and Miss Pratt considered that she was stuck up and were glad she was going. Besides, she was so idle that it wasn't fair on the others. Some work had to be done in any house, and Miss Delorme, as she called herself, was a shirker. Helga would find her out before she was a day older.

"She's whistling down the stairs for you now," said Miss Pratt. "She'll sit there and whistle for me rather than take the trouble to come down, though she knows it makes Mrs. Stair as mad—"

Helga hurried upstairs with her tray, and found, as Miss Pratt had predicted, that Miss Delorme was sitting on the top of the kitchen flight waiting for her. In the dining-room everything was as ill-managed as in the pantry. The air was close and the hearth untidy. When Helga spread the cloth

on the table she found it creased because it had not been put away properly. Miss Delorme sat down in an easy-chair and looked at an illustrated paper; but she put it down suddenly when Helga had nearly finished the table.

"There now!" she said, "I've forgotten the flowers. Another of their fidgety ways. What do they want flowers for? Just to annoy us, I suppose."

Helga had noticed some glasses full of dead flowers on the sideboard and had meant to take them down with her. But apparently Miss Delorme thought otherwise. She pulled them out of the dirty half-used water, threw them on the tray, went to a cupboard near the fire and came back with a bunch of flabby daffodils.

"She gave me these before lunch," she said; "but I put 'em away and forgot."

"I'll fetch some clean water and cut their stalks," said Helga.

"Oh! what's it matter? They'll do," said Miss Delorme.

Helga looked on helplessly; and as the flowers were being stuffed anyhow into the glasses Miss Stair came into the room and looked on too. At first she took no notice of Helga. Her eyes were fixed on Miss Delorme and what she was doing.

"Those flowers are dead and those glasses are dirty," she said; "they can all go away."

"The flowers were bought this morning," said Miss Delorme, sulkily.

"Then you should have put them into water this morning," said Miss Stair, in a tone of icy rebuke that seemed to send Miss Delorme into a tantrum. "Take them away, please, and take care what you are doing. You'll smash those glasses directly."

Then, when Miss Delorme, with a jingle of glasses and a toss of her chin, had left the room, Marcella turned her

cold appraising glance on Helga.

"My aunt told me you were coming," she said. "I tried to stop it. I think this confusion of work and classes is a mistake."

"I didn't know what else to do," said Helga.

"That is the worst of it. We get people who can find no other employment, and know nothing of the work they undertake. Look at that glass and silver." She went closer to the table. "She has brought it up clean for once," she said. Then she went into the drawing-room and shut the door. Helga could not feel that she had received either a warm welcome or a violently unkind one; but, as usual, Marcella had chilled her.

By bedtime she felt as if she had been in the house a week, and as if the week had been a long one. Dinner had been most unpleasant. Miss Delorme waited with so much bounce and clatter that she brought a richly deserved reproof on herself, after which she retired to the kitchen and refused to wait at all. So Helga had to finish the business by herself, and when it came to clearing the table for dessert she made mistakes. She remembered that in Mrs. Warwick's house by some magic the dessert was on the table and everything else appertaining to dinner out of the room at the same moment, but she did not know how it was done. She was still carrying out plates and dishes while Miss Stair ate her orange, and on Miss Stair's forehead there was a little frown of endurance and displeasure. A message had been sent to Miss Delorme commanding her to return, but when Helga delivered it she was told that the two cats might wait on themselves, and that if Miss Delorme was worried any more she would leave the 'ouse next morning.

At supper Helga found that Mrs. Johnson had the temperament of her physique. She was lazy, good-natured,

and vulgar. Miss Pratt, the beady-eyed girl, seemed to be the best of the three. She was, Helga discovered later, a farmer's daughter, and had been used to work. She was not like the other two, a sample of the waste material that never works if it can idle, and never works well. But as Helga sat at the kitchen table and ate bread and cheese, she knew that she had sunk in the world by coming here, not through undertaking to scrub and clean, but through the associates forced on her. She had been thankful to find that she was to have a bedroom to herself, a little attic with no fireplace, and miserably furnished. As she shut the door she shut herself into her own world for a time, and though she was tired she did not go to sleep at once. She thought of her parents' surprise when they heard of her venture, of their sad consent, and of their parting from her. She had made the best of it at home, said that Mrs. Stair only employed ladies, and that she wanted Helga to do fine mending and keep glass and silver clean. Mrs. Byrne had murmured something about *Stütze der Hausfrau*, and had said she supposed Helga would have her meals with the family. Mr. Byrne had not liked the idea at all, and had said that Helga must come back directly he got to work again. They had all three pretended to each other that it was a temporary expedient, a little adventure for the child, one that she could carry on if it was successful, and give up if it made her unhappy. But in reality Mrs. Byrne was relieved to think that Helga would be well-fed and sheltered, and that there would be one mouth less to feed at home, and that if she herself went short Helga would not be there to see. A man any one can deceive in such ways when it is desirable, but a girl who loves you has sharp eyes.

Helga woke early, dressed, went downstairs, found some brooms and

dusters, and began to do the drawing-room. It was pitch dark outside and bitter cold, but she turned on the light and soon got warm with the hard work of making a dirty room clean. Cold as it was she threw the windows wide open, and when Mrs. Johnson put her tousled head into the door she exclaimed with horror, and said Helga would catch her death. She also said there would be a cup of early tea ready downstairs in five minutes if Helga liked to come for it. Helga wondered how this miracle would be performed, since the kitchen fire was not alight yet, but she found out when she went down. A small shallow saucepan was boiled on methylated spirits every morning, and made tea both for the ladies downstairs and the cats upstairs. Some weeks later Helga happened to hear Mrs. Stair say to a friend that she did not care for early tea, but always had it at seven because she knew then that the kitchen fire had been lighted at half-past six. At intervals she complained that the consumption of methylated spirits was outrageous, but she was always told by Mrs. Johnson that the foreign coffee machine used by Miss Stair used all that came into the house, except the few drops required for cleaning silver.

Mrs. Stair and her niece by marriage were so unlike each other that Helga wondered they lived together; but she wondered less when she found that Marcella was rarely at home. Mrs. Stair was one of those women who are idle themselves but expect miracles of work from others. She did not understand the domestic arts as Mrs. Byrne did. She had never learned exactly how things should be done, and how long they should take to do, and one result of her incompetence was that no one could please her. Helga worked valiantly, and from the moment she got rid of Miss Delorme kept everything under her charge at a

high pitch of cleanliness. She got terribly tired every day, but she could have borne that if Mrs. Stair had been a different woman, if she had recognized good work, and if she had known her own mind for two days together. But her discontent and her caprices kept the whole staff on edge. One week she was a vegetarian and a teetotaler, the next she believed in beef and beer; a magazine article would send her to curds and whey, a paragraph in a daily paper to nuts and cheese. Every experiment was tried, too, with a view to economy downstairs, but was not allowed to reach the dining-room unmodified, as it might not suit Miss Stair. So Helga heard of food riots before she came, and coal riots when Mrs. Stair wanted her cooking done by coke, and cleaning riots when the edict went forth that all the heavy carpets and curtains were to be shaken every week. The traditions of fuss and ill-feeling were handed down through the changing procession of servants and "helps," and it seemed to Helga that the feud between up and downstairs must be as bitter now as it had ever been. Many things went on downstairs that made her most unhappy, small tricks, small thefts, small evasions. To know of them seemed to splash her with mud. She had thought before she came that she would not mind working hard, but that she would hate to wear a cap and apron, to say "Ma'am" (as Mrs. Stair expected), and to ruin her hands. But in experience she found that none of these things counted like the hateful necessity of associating with her fellow "helps," hearing their clack, and witnessing their inconsiderable knaveries. She looked forward to the warmer days when she would be able to sit by herself in the pantry, but they did not come quickly.

Miss Stair's presence in the house made Helga no happier. She was

coldly polite, and she recognized that the new parlormaid worked well, but she managed to make both her politeness and her recognition offensive. Her manner implied that Helga had found her level.

"Your mother must be a capable woman herself," she said one day; "she seems to have trained you thoroughly."

"Yes, she did," said Helga.

"How sensible of her!" said Miss Stair.

"I think it would have been more sensible if I had been trained to something else."

But Miss Stair did not enter into that. She began to talk of a migration to the country that was being arranged for the summer months. Mrs. Warwick's property had all gone to a nephew now in India, and pending his return the executors were letting her houses at Wimbledon and Gromwell furnished. Marcella had heard that the one at Gromwell was still to be had, and joined with her aunt in taking it. Mrs. Stair proposed to go there shortly, and Miss Stair graciously hoped that Helga would go too. The work, she thought, would be no harder than at Surbiton. Helga felt sure that if it was any harder she could not do it. Brendon House, like most others of its date, had been built by men with neither mercy nor understanding for the women who would have to work in it. There was a dark, steep, winding flight of stairs from the ground floor to the basement that hindered you when you were in a hurry, and was downright dangerous when you were carrying a heavy tray. Every scuttle of coals had to be carried upstairs, some of them to the second floor where Miss Stair chose to have a sitting-room. It was a house that swallowed stair carpet, Mrs. Stair sometimes said; but when Helga had been there six weeks she thought it swallowed flesh and blood too. She began to look anæmic and

to be so over-tired at night that she slept badly. Then Miss Pratt departed in a huff one day, and for some time Mrs. Stair did not fill her place. She said in a fretful voice that if two healthy women could not give her niece and her a chop for dinner she did not know what the world was coming to, and that when she saw Miss Byrne rattle through the day's work she knew how little there was to do.

Marcella never argued with her aunt. She wondered frequently why her uncle had married a woman who was so fussy and unrefined. She would have liked a sufficient staff of well-paid servants who behaved, as far as she was concerned, like well-oiled machines. She hated anything ugly and creaking. But she had found long since that Mrs. Stair's mind was both fluid and tough, a jelly-fish mind that no one can shape for long. It was her nature to wobble and yet not change materially. Just now the simple life and the employment of ladies were the crazes she pursued, and, with the ladies to practise on, tried to combine. Mrs. Johnson gave notice when Mrs. Stair said that in future no one in the house was to taste meat except Miss Stair, who refused to be converted. Mrs. Stair had been reading a poetical account of meals consisting of one dish only, and she had made a weekly menu for her kitchen. Junket twice a week, rice twice a week, haricot beans twice a week, nuts on Sunday, porridge for breakfast, bread and cheese for supper. She asked what more the human body could require if it was not greedy? Mrs. Johnson said that for her part she required a great deal more, and that the very sound of such meals gave her a craving for a steak-and-kidney pudding and a pint of porter. She would leave Brendon House this day month, or sooner if Mrs. Stair could suit herself.

"I'm going," she said to Helga, at the kitchen dinner-time. "I can't stand



it any longer. Have some junket."

Helga had done two women's work that morning, but junket happened to be a dish at which her gorge rose. So she ate dry bread, and Mrs. Johnson said there would not be over much of that henceforward, as the "old cat" had been reading some rubbish about ordering food by weight, and had said she would only allow so many ounces per day for each member of the household. Butter never lasted as it should at Brendon House, because Mrs. Stair, who would spend ten guineas on a hat and thirty guineas on a gown, and fifty guineas on a modest set of furs, would bicker and haggle with every cook she had rather than order the extra weekly pound of butter that would have made the supply sufficient. Fifty-two pounds of butter at one and fourpence a pound would have cost her three pounds nine and fourpence a year; but it was a sum she chose to save on butter even if by so doing she spent it on a constant change of cooks. She was one of those women whose economies are costly and disagreeable, but who never have the sense to find this out.

One afternoon shortly before Easter Helga got away for an hour and went to see her father and mother. Mr. Byrne was up and downstairs now, but not strong enough to look for work. How they lived the girl did not know. She had managed to pay for her caps and aprons by selling a gold brooch she had had since she was a child, and every penny of her small wages she had carried home. She saw that the house was being gradually stripped of everything that could be sold, and she saw many other signs of want that made her heart ache. There never seemed to be any fire or anything being cooked. Her mother's face looked bloodless and transparent, her father had given up his pipe, they took no paper. All the little daily expenses of life had stopped, all the warmth and

comfort that even a poor man's wages give him. Several times lately she had not seen her mother at all. Mrs. Byrne went out now, it seemed, for hours together. "Where to?" asked Helga. But either Mr. Byrne did not know or would not say. She went back wondering. The emptiness and silence of the little house she had known so cheerful wrung her heart. Assuredly she could not add to its burden for a day, and the dread of having to do so kept her where she was. If she had been a real servant Mrs. Johnson assured her she need not have put up with anything. Real servants had the market in their hands and could stand on their rights: evenings out, beef, beer, perquisites, all that tends to happiness. But ladies were not in the same boat. No one wanted them, no one believed in them, not one in a thousand would give them a trial. Mrs. Johnson had another opening luckily. Her sister was matron at a small hospital, and had persuaded the governors to try a lady cook, namely, Mrs. Johnson; but if Miss Byrne wanted Mrs. Johnson's honest opinion, and did not want to find herself in the streets, she had better stay where she was and lump the two cats as long as she could keep alive.

That day, as she was waiting at dinner, Helga began to wonder whether keeping alive would be easy. She felt faint and dizzy, stumbled once with a vegetable dish, and saw a slight frown of pained surprise on Miss Stair's brow. The two ladies were discussing plans, and it appeared that Mrs. Stair was going to Gromwell directly after Easter, while Miss Stair went abroad with the Ashleys.

"Is Mr. Ashley quite well again?" asked Mrs. Stair.

"I believe so," said Marcella.

"He was ill at Christmas, wasn't he?"

"Yes," said Marcella.

She volunteered no information, and her forbidding manner stopped further questions. She often treated her aunt in this way, and Mrs. Stair, though she resented it, never seemed able to meet it effectively.

"Where do you meet Clive?" she continued now.

"In Paris," said Marcella.

The two ladies helped themselves to cutlets. Mrs. Stair observed that the tomatoes with them were not cooked enough. Miss Stair assented. Helga put the dish on the side-table and wished this new singing in her ears would stop.

"What will you do if Celestine disappears you?" said Mrs. Stair.

"Celestine," as Helga knew, was the trade name of Miss Stair's French dressmaker.

"Why should she?" asked Miss Stair.

"Just because it is so important that she should not. Things always happen like that to me. You will want your new clothes for Paris."

"I dare say I shall have them," said Marcella, and then she asked Helga for bread.

"You do look dead beat," said Mrs. Johnson, when the girl went down with the empty cutlet-dish. "Not one left. I thought as much. Catch them living on junket. Shall I carry up the meringues for you? They'll finish those, or my name's not Johnson."

But Helga took the tray herself and

went into the room with it. As she opened the door Mrs. Stair seemed to be talking volubly.

"In Paris," she was saying, "all the chestnuts out and the Bois charming—you might get some riding—such chances. I should take a smaller house, I think, or perhaps a flat—should you have a flat? I suppose it would be London, not France—only a temporary sojourn before settling down. Celestine must certainly be told to hurry. I think it should be settled in Paris—so suitable—you had better bring back a new French maid. Meringues—perhaps you will have a French cook too; but some men prefer English food. I wonder——"

Miss Stair, with displeased eyes and a determined air, began to talk of the Messina earthquake. Helga cleared the table for dessert and hardly heard what was said. She was too tired to listen, too tired to care. Marcella was going to Paris to meet Clive, and would wear beautiful clothes and try to attract him. Perhaps she would succeed. Perhaps Clive would change his mind and let the lawyers dissolve a marriage that was not a marriage. Such things were done with the aid of money, Helga knew. Anyhow to-night she could not help it, could not even dread it, or believe it. Her body ached with fatigue, her mind was dull with exhaustion. She wanted rest.

(To be continued.)

### EDMUND GOSSE'S POEMS.

Writing some seventy years ago in the *Révue Deux Mondes*, Sainte-Beuve expressed his opinion that "il existe, en un mot, chez les trois quarts des hommes Un poète mort jeune à qui l'homme survit"—a piece of pessimism for which he was promptly and properly rebuked by Alfred de Musset, who pointed out that his friend's aphorism

belied him, since it was almost a verse as it stood; and, surrendering him to his "offended Muse," contended that:

en nous il existe souvent  
Un poète endormi toujours jeune et vivant.

We are reminded of this episode by Mr. Gosse's well-planned and well-printed volume of "Collected Poems"

(Heinemann 5s. net). Those who are familiar with his fluent and pellucid prose, who, perhaps, know him chiefly as a sympathetic critic and an accomplished essayist, have sometimes allowed themselves to forget—"so vast is art, so narrow human wit"—that he is also a poet of the most rare and delicate sensibility, a born metrist, and a keen lover of nature. And this poet is certainly not *endormi*, still less dead. But, regarding his art as a gift, not lightly to be abused, he has versified only *à ses heures*; and waited until his mind was duly attuned to the notes of that Phrygian flute whose music—as Lucian tells us—is audible only to the adept. His Euterpe is no Muse-of-all-work. He has never condescended to the temptations of the "topical," or set his words to the jingle of the crossways. On the contrary, he has always kept his song at a certain elevation, remembering, with the fine *pensée* of Joubert, that "the lyre is a winged instrument."

In a Preface of singular modesty, and touched a little sadly by the retrospect which must inevitably accompany an ingathering extending over a lengthy period, Mr. Gosse defines his position. His view, he says, is of 1872, when his technique was determined. "If I am a poet at all, I belong to the age of the Franco-German War, of the introduction of Japanese art into Europe, of the discoveries of Huxley and Hæckel, and of the Oxford lectures of Matthew Arnold." One may smile a little—as, indeed, he himself does—at this "intellectual topography." But what we are here more concerned with is the fact that there was no initial fumbling in the technique he mentions. What is most notable about it is that what it was, it remains. Take, for instance, the final stanza of "The Return of the Swallows," which is one of the earliest pieces:

And something awoke in the slumbering heart

Of the alien birds in their African air,  
And they paused, and alighted, and twittered apart,

And met in the broad white, dreamy square;

And the sad slave-woman, who lifted up

From the fountain her broad-lipped, earthen cup,

Said to herself, with a weary sigh,  
"To-morrow the swallows will northward fly."

Compare with this the last verses of "The Land of France," which belongs to 1909:

Sands of Dunkirk are not too cold for me;

Nor dales of Roussillon too full of fire;  
Down Tarn and Lot my memory leaps in glee;

Long miles of poplar'd Anjou cannot tire

Feet that to frost-capp'd Dauphiné aspire;

Shouting of waves that on black Penmarch fall—

Slow stream of Aiguës-Mortes—I love them all.

France, take my hand in those kind hands of thine;

Like a chill swallow to thy fields I fly!

Warmth, beauty, calm and happiness are mine

When o'er me bends that soft and radiant sky,

When in that vivid atmosphere I sigh—

Sigh, for pure gladness, while my pulses dance

A joyful measure to the praise of France.

But while one remarks that, in metrical skill, there are scant signs of alteration, this is no more than to say that no alteration was required, save the increased facility that comes of practice. In respect of form, Mr. Gosse entered the arena fully-armed, and had consequently to add nothing to his panoply. On the other hand, the mat-

ter of his work, as the very titles of his books imply ("In Russet and Silver," "An Autumn Garden") has changed with the passing of the years; and as his friend, Robert Louis Stevenson, says—in the letter written from Vaillima only two days before his death which acknowledges "Tusitala"—takes on an autumnal sobriety as it goes, growing, not indeed less "rich in adornment," but more "natural, personal, sincere and articulate in substance." This is partly expressed in the poet's own epigraph:

Life, that, when youth was hot and bold,  
Leaped up in scarlet and in gold,  
Now walks, by graver hopes possessed,  
In russet and in silver dressed;

and finds larger utterance in the impressive verses that close the opening poem:

Thank God, that, while the nerves decay  
And muscles dessicate away,  
The brain's the hardest part of men,  
And thrives till three-score years and ten;

That, tho' the crescent flesh be wound  
In soft, unseemly folds around,  
The heart may, all the days we live,  
Grow more alert and sensitive.

Then, thews and prickly nerves, adieu!  
Thanks for the years I spent with you;  
Gently and cheerfully we part:  
Now I must live for brain and heart.

Fourteen years later, in "The Autumn Garden," the same thought dominates "A Song for the New Year":

Why, then, my New Year's wish shall be  
For love and love alone;  
More hands to hold out joy to me,  
More hearts for me to own;  
And if the gain  
In part be pain,—  
Since time but gives to take again,—  
Yet more than gold a thousandfold  
Is love that's neither bought nor sold.

How should one speak of a volume such as this, the hiving of well-nigh forty years! To Mr. Gosse's contemporaries—to those who have walked with him through good and evil hap—the way is strewn with memories, thick-coming memories of the Past. Criticism may set aside her considering cap. It is no time for the weighing of values, where all has been valued already. One listens to the bygone voices, renews the old sensations. One reads again the old favorites, "The White-throat," "Wind of Provence," "The Mænad's Grave," "The Charcoal-burner." Here is "Firdausi in Exile," which one recalls as an introduction to "The Epic of Kings"; here is the spirited "Cruise of the Rover," which belongs to the "Magazine of Art" in Henley's reign, when it was illustrated by Seymour Lucas; here are the clever Popsque couplets addressed to Oliver Wendell Holmes on his seventy-fifth birthday; here are a score more which bring back a vanished time. The beautiful early sonnet "On a Lute found in a Sarcophagus," and the dexterous "Alcyone," serve to show how skilful is this craftsman in an exacting form; the "Memorial Verses," with how light a hand, and yet how sure a touch, he can paint the people he has known and loved. The "R.B." of this will be easily recognized:

His soul went singing like a mountain-eer  
Who climbs the hills, and carols as he climbs;  
Above the snow he heard the fairy chimes  
Of God's faint bells, and felt no shade of fear.  
He leaped in faith from year to glimmering year;  
Nothing to him seemed poor or vile or vain,  
Since all the fibres of his heart and brain  
Were braced by hope's high Alpine atmosphere.

I have known no goodlier spirit! Where  
 he walked,  
 Love masqueraded in rough skins  
 and claws,  
 Feigning to be some monster of  
 the woods;

Loud was the voice wherewith he  
 rhymed and talked,  
 But warmer heart, or moved in kinder  
 cause,  
 Was never stirred by man's vicissitudes.

One of the most interesting of these "Memorial Verses" is a *ballado* on the death of that "Prince-Jeweller" of rhyme, Théodore de Banville, which serves further to bring to mind Mr. Gosse's connection with the revival, circa 1875-85, of the old French forms of Villon and Clement Marot and Charles of Orleans. We say "revival," to be accurate, because some of them had been written by Chaucer; and they had also been essayed fitfully and timidly by Surrey and Patrick Carey, and even by writers of the eighteenth century. And when, at last, they were marshalled in force, they had long been, so to speak, in the air. Swinburne was thinking of them in the "Ballad of Burdens"; and the stanza of his admirable "Match" is a modification of the Dante *triolet*. Rossetti paraphrased Villon's "Ballad of Dead Ladies" in a way that, had he played the game as he did in Villon's "Rondel to Death," would have made all later versions needless. Mr. Gosse himself, in his "On Viol and Flute," of 1873, wrote

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early *rondels*, which, he would admit, were *rondels* only in name. But not until later do people seem to have become aware, through Banville's "Odes Funambulesques" and his "Petit Traité de Poésie Française," that there were fixed rules for all these forms—rules as definite and inexorable as those for the Petrarchan sonnet. An article by Mr. Gosse in the *Cornhill Magazine* for July, 1877, first called attention to what was then being done; and he was fortunate enough to illustrate his "Plea for certain Exotic Forms of Verse" by an excellent and unexcelled "Chant Royal," one of the most intricate of the exercises which "the bigots of that iron time" regarded as a futile dancing in fetters. As though there were no fetters in the sonnet of Milton and Wordsworth! There are examples of most of the French forms in the "Collected Poems" (especially a "Ballade of Dead Cities"), which may serve as models to the student. It is a far cry to 1877, but the imported measures are still being written as assiduously as ever, both in England and America; and it is encouraging to those who, like Mr. Gosse, first attempted them seriously in English, to note, that, in most cases, they are being written by versifiers who, still blissfully ignorant of Banville and the "Petit Traité"—to say nothing of Marot and François Villon—follow sedulously in the footsteps of the makers of the 'Seventies.

Austin Dobson.

## THE COMING DELUGE.

Money is perhaps the mightiest engine to which man can lend an intelligent guidance. Unheard, unfelt, unseen, it has the power to so distribute the burdens, gratifications, and opportunities of life, that each individual shall enjoy that share of them to which his merits or good fortune may fairly entitle him;

or, contrariwise, to disperse them with so partial a hand as to violate every principle of justice, and perpetuate a succession of social slaveries to the end of time.—*Alexander Del Mar.*

In no period of British history has the national conscience been more



keenly alive to the disabilities under which great masses of our population labor, or more genuinely anxious to alleviate those disabilities by the introduction of practical measures of reform, than at the present day. And nobody who visits the great mining and manufacturing centres of British industry, or inspects the poorer quarters of our largest and most famous cities, can doubt for a moment that there is much scope for the reformer's activities. At the same time, while there are many ready and able hands working at the amelioration of the social, industrial and political conditions amidst which we are living, there is one factor in our national life—perhaps of greater importance than many others put together—to which the bulk of our people give little or no attention, yet which is at the present moment undergoing a change calculated to vitiate much of the good reforming work being done in other directions. I refer to the purchasing and measuring function of the nation's money.

To appreciate clearly the vital importance of maintaining as far as possible the stability of our great purchasing and measuring instrument and standard of deferred payments, it is necessary to recall the fact that practically every transaction of our daily life—private, public, personal, corporate, national, imperial—is carried through directly or indirectly by the aid of money, and that any fluctuation in the value (*i.e.* purchasing-power) of money must therefore affect each and every individual in the State more or less seriously. The sudden arbitrary changing of the pint measure to three-quarters of its ordinary capacity, or the extension of the standard yard to forty-six, or fifty-six, or sixty-six inches would inflict far fewer and less serious injustices upon the community at large than the shrinkage of the sovereign from a purchasing-power of

twenty shillings to, say, that of only fifteen shillings. Nevertheless, it is a fact that a sovereign nowadays only goes as far as fifteen shillings did a little while ago. Our pound sterling has in reality during the last fifteen years lost more than a quarter of its purchasing-power! Moreover, there are good reasons for believing that this shrinkage will continue. It is quite possible that the distortion of our monetary measure now in progress is but the beginning of a movement that may conceivably prove more revolutionary than anything that the most extreme Socialists have yet imagined. Indeed, if the movement be rapid and continued in a marked degree, many forms of accumulated wealth must of necessity disappear, and in a way more complete than could be effected by the most drastic of class legislation. At the same time, if such a shrinkage in monetary values should come to pass, the rewards of labor would also slip through the fingers of the poorer classes. For prices always rise before wages in such circumstances, and the laboring man would therefore find himself the victim of a cruel delusion—the seeming prosperity of increased earnings being invariably discounted by a still more rapidly advancing cost of living. What was gained in one direction would be lost in another. And with the result that great masses of our population, notwithstanding every effort to assist and raise them, would perforce, for want of means, remain in the same condition of poverty, degradation and arrested development as that in which we see them to-day.

But, it will be asked, why has our good British sovereign shrunk in value? And what grounds are there for conjuring up this nightmare of a further shrinkage? The answer is simple. Like every other commodity in this world, although in a different way and to a different degree, gold is subject to

the laws of supply and demand—an increased demand tending, all other things being equal, to raise its value, and an increased supply to diminish its value. During the last half-century there has been a vastly increased demand for gold, practically every great nation in the world abandoning silver as a chief monetary instrument and adopting in its stead the more precious yellow metal. *Per contra*, in England, and in certain other Western countries, very great economies in the use of gold have been effected by the continued development of banking, of cheques and bills of exchange, and of credit facilities of all kinds. At the present moment, with mints open to free coinage of gold, the value of every ounce of new gold unearthed is determined by the purchasing-power of the gold coins already in use. At the same time the purchasing-power of the gold moneys in use obviously bears some relation (though a relation difficult to define mathematically) to the amount of gold, coined and uncoined, in the possession of mankind and actively employed. Exactly what this amount is nobody can say with any degree of certainty; nor is there any need for us to attempt an estimate at the moment. Suffice to say the output of new gold from the mines of the world during the last few years has altogether eclipsed anything known in history. Moreover, there seems every probability of the output increasing. With an immense flood of the precious metal of unprecedented magnitude pouring into the centres of civilization, commerce and government, can we feel surprised that, notwithstanding the additional demand for gold, its value all the world over is steadily diminishing?—that its purchasing-power is shrinking?—in other words, that prices generally, measured in gold, are everywhere advancing?

The same thing has happened before, and with precisely the same results.

The middle of the sixteenth century was marked by extraordinary discoveries of silver in South America and Mexico. The precious metal was shipped across the Atlantic, and slowly found its level in the currencies of Europe, with the result that the purchasing-power of money dwindled in an extraordinary way. Sir George Evelyn, in his paper contributed to the Royal Society in 1798, attempted to prove that between 1550 and 1795 the level of prices rose 400 to 500 per cent. Although his conclusions have been severely criticized by Hallam and others, there is no doubt whatever that prices at least doubled (in other words, that our monetary measure shrank by at least one-half) during the period referred to, the greater part of the change occurring within a hundred years of the discovery of Potosí.<sup>1</sup>

During the first half of the last century, when the effects of a greatly reduced output of gold and silver from the mines of the world were emphasized by the rejection by Great Britain of silver as a chief monetary instrument, prices dwindled very seriously—over 45 per cent. according to Mr. Sauerbeck, and nearly 60 per cent. according to Jevons. Then came the marvellous discoveries of gold in California and Australia. The effects were at once apparent. Prices quickly swung round, and an upward movement set in, traces of which can be discerned till nearly the middle of the seventies. The distortion in our monetary measure was very marked at first, the sovereign losing some 25 per cent. of its value between 1849 and 1857. Subsequently a partial recovery took place; but there is no question that the increased output from the mines materially affected for a number of years the value of all the gold and gold money then existing, seriously dis-

<sup>1</sup> Vide Professor L. L. Price's "Money and its Relation to Prices."

torting its purchasing and measuring functions, and inflicting corresponding injustices upon all those dependent upon fixed wages, incomes, pensions and the like.

Astounding as the flood of gold from the mines of California and Australia seemed to our fathers, it was, as a matter of fact, quite a small matter in comparison with the great deluge of precious metal that is now steadily spreading over the surface of the civilized world. The average annual production of gold for the first half of the nineteenth century was only about 3,150,000*l*. Then came the most wonderful discoveries ever known up to that time. The world's output for the next ten years was approximately as under:

	£
1851 . . . . .	16,600,000
1852 . . . . .	36,550,000
1853 . . . . .	31,000,000
1854 . . . . .	25,490,000
1855 . . . . .	27,010,000
1856 . . . . .	29,520,000
1857 . . . . .	26,650,000
1858 . . . . .	24,930,000
1859 . . . . .	24,970,000
1860 . . . . .	23,850,000

Can we feel surprised that the whole world became delirious with excitement—many forsaking all, and rushing in flocks to the gold-fields; others foreseeing dire disaster and social chaos in the monetary revolution that seemed inevitable? And yet, what was that production compared to the output that we have been receiving during the last ten years? Here are the figures:

	£
1901 . . . . .	53,544,000
1902 . . . . .	60,869,000
1903 . . . . .	66,650,000
1904 . . . . .	70,688,000
1905 . . . . .	76,675,000
1906 . . . . .	82,569,000
1907 . . . . .	84,904,000
1908 . . . . .	91,450,000
1909 . . . . .	93,000,000 <sup>2</sup>
1910 . . . . .	94,000,000 <sup>2</sup>

Nearly eight hundred millions sterling of new gold added to the world's stock in the last ten years, as compared with the 267 millions added in 1851-1860! Where will it end? And where will it land us all?

The relation between money and price levels has been the subject of innumerable disquisitions during the last hundred years. It is only necessary to mention such names as Jacob, Tooke, Newmarch, Cairnes, Macculloch, Ricardo, Chevalier, Bagehot, Jevons, Giffen; such Professors as Lexis, Rogers, Walker, Nicholson, Foxwell, Marshall, Price; such index-number specialists as Dr. Soetbeer and Mr. Sauerbeck, to recall the wealth of expert knowledge that has been brought to bear on this question. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century the relation was no doubt a comparatively intimate one (as it is to this day in India and other parts of the East, where but little advance has been made by the people at large beyond the stage when metallic money forms the chief instrument of purchase); but with the growth of banking and the multiplication of credit-spinning devices such as those with which we are familiar at the present day, the connection between price levels and the volume of metallic money in use has become greatly obscured. So much so, that there are not wanting advocates of the theory that credit, and not metallic money, is now the determining factor in the problem. Whilst in highly-developed States the relation between the instrument of purchase and the commodity purchased is admittedly most difficult to define, there can be no doubt that the relation is there. The connecting link, as has been proved by Bagehot, Giffen and others, is to be found in the banks' reserves. In its issue of the 21st of January 1911, the *Statist* published a table showing that the gold holdings of the chief central banks of

the world, and treasuries which act as central banks, had increased from 500,-267,000*l.* on the 31st of December, 1900, to 886,447,000*l.* on the 31st of December, 1910—an increase of over 77 per cent. These increased gold reserves imply a great expansion of credit. So that, whether we regard credit or metallic money in active use as the determining factor in the adjustment of price levels, an inflation of prices (*i.e.* a fall in the purchasing-power of money) seems now inevitable. As a matter of fact, this inflation of prices is at present actually in progress, as the index numbers regularly published by the *Economist* and other authorities clearly prove. As the regular annual output of gold is now of unprecedented magnitude, and as there exist no reasons whatever for anticipating any serious diminution in this phenomenal output, the conclusion seems inevitable that the fall in gold must continue. Again we ask, Where will this distortion of our public measure of value end? And where will it land us all?

In view of the exceptionally grave nature of the possibility before us—the shrinkage in wealth of many of our capitalists and property-owners, and the arrest of material progress and social betterment so far as the great majority of our population—the fixed-wage-earning classes—are concerned, it may be well to consider what policy is best calculated to avert the consequences of the deluge of gold that is now threatening to submerge us. Theoretically, two courses are open—to increase demand and to restrict supply. Practically, we can only attempt the former; for although over 55 per cent. of the world's supplies of new gold are obtained within the British Empire, it is beyond the range of practical politics to check the economic development of South Africa, Australia, Rhodesia, India, Canada and other portions of the King's overseas dominions, in respect of

gold-mining, no matter what the consequences of the golden deluge may be. (By the way, it is perhaps not generally known that over two thousand millions sterling in gold has been proved to exist in the main reefs of the marvellous Witwatersrand alone. Heaven only knows what may be discovered hereafter in other parts of the Transvaal or of Rhodesia. The whole country is highly mineralized. Australia and Central Asia, too, have hardly been scratched yet, as a whole; so there are many possibilities in the direction of still more gold discoveries). Unable, then, in any way to influence supplies, we are thrown back for our remedy on the only other economic alternative—an increased use and consumption of the precious metal. Here, fortunately, it may be possible to set machinery in motion that might conceivably correct, in some degree, if not wholly, the distortion now taking place in our public measure of value. Thus Government, if backed by public opinion, could not only make a far larger use of gold itself in England, and in other parts of the Empire, but it could, by legislation, compel those who trade in money and make a business of receiving and safeguarding the nation's ready cash, to afford the public a metallic security more adequately proportionate to the magnitude of their liabilities than is at present customary. In these days the demands for gold could undoubtedly be considerably increased, greatly to the benefit of the people at large.

A satisfactory feature of the policy here outlined is the fact that it exactly coincides with the course urged by many patriotic and eminent thinkers on entirely different grounds. Thus, the political necessity of a substantial war reserve in gold is a point which we alone, of all the great nations of the earth, deliberately neglect. Germany, Russia, France and other countries hold immense reserves of gold for po-

litical ends; we trust entirely to private interests for the "sinews of war," and expect the great banks and finance houses to shoulder our monetary liabilities in times of national emergency. This they will no doubt do, as far as they can, and for a consideration. As has been very forcibly pointed out by Mr. Edgar Crammond, in *Manchester* last year, and again before the London Chamber of Commerce a few months ago, financial preparation for war forms as vital a part of our scheme of imperial defence as naval and military preparation. Why, then, should we neglect this most important factor? Why should we continue to expose ourselves to the tender mercies of an enemy who, profiting by Napoleon's miscalculations in this respect, and by the additional knowledge now available to all who care to imbibe it, would have no difficulty in engineering a very formidable raid on our private reserves of gold, thereby creating trouble and confusion in our midst at the very moment when we should require all our money as well as all our wits? It has been said that if such a raid failed, we should make matters extremely uncomfortable for the would-be raiders. The same might be assumed of any raid—naval and military, as well as financial. Further, it has been argued that if Government created a special political reserve of gold, there would be great difficulty in preventing the business world from utilizing that gold for its own purposes. Possibly so. That would depend upon the strength and *personnel* of Government. Be this as it may, there are at least two reasons of great weight why Government should hold a substantial reserve of gold of its own for political emergencies.

So, too, there are reasons why Government should hold another reserve of gold in connection with its commercial obligations. Against the liabilities of

the Post Office and trustee savings banks Government holds practically no reserves at all, only a little till-money—some 300,000*l.* And yet the total due to depositors (exclusive of Government stock held on their account), exceeds two hundred millions sterling! Just as in the case of Imperial defence, Government look to private financial and banking institutions to supply them with cash in time of stress. And here, again, Shylock will no doubt do all in his power—at a price. We obviously have no right to expect financiers to work for nothing. At the same time a serious run on the Government savings banks would of necessity very greatly inconvenience the money market.

The laxity of Government in the matter of its own political and commercial reserves of gold is doubly dangerous, in view of the admitted insufficiency of the gold reserves at present held by the Bank of England and other private banking and financial institutions. From the days of Jevons and Bagehot up to the present moment, every experienced economist has warned the nation against the inadequacy of its gold reserves. Newspapers of every shade of political opinion, from *The Times* downwards, have urged that the Bank of England's gold reserves are insufficient in comparison with the current liabilities of the banks of the United Kingdom. The trading public, through the agency of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom, have over and over again hammered at this subject, but without practical result. Politicians, even, have joined in the cry. Thus, Mr. Asquith, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, at a bankers' dinner in London in May 1906, said that this question of the gold reserves was "a matter of grave and increasing importance, and it was at that moment engaging his most serious attention." The late Lord Goschen followed at an-



other bankers' dinner in July 1906: "Here we are with enormous liabilities, and with a smaller stock of gold than any other country holds. . . . It is not a satisfactory situation." . . . Yet, in spite of this unanimity of opinion, nothing has been done. The one and only remedy is legislation that will compel all who deal in the savings and cash reserves of the people to hold a certain proportion of their liabilities in gold. In this way private reserves of gold of a substantial volume would be accumulated and available in times of emergency. The dishonest practices now resorted to by certain banks of borrowing some thirty millions sterling from the Bank of England in the last week of December for a few days, simply to show to the public substantial balances in "cash and at the Bank of England" at the close of each year, when accounts are published, could be abandoned for ever. The public would see for itself that each bank's cash reserve came up to statutory requirements.

Here, then, we have three new demands for gold calculated to add materially to the nation's political and economic strength, and also, though possibly in but a small degree, to correct the serious distortion in our monetary measure that is now threatening us. The demand that could confidently be expected to arise from an extension of Government's gold-using policy to other parts of the Empire would be very much more effective, and might perhaps in itself be relied upon wholly to correct the shrinkage in gold values that is the subject of the present inquiry. In this connection we have the experience of the past to guide us—an experience identical with that through which we are now passing, and invaluable to us therefore in our effort to find a solution to the present gold situation. When, in the middle of the last century, gold commenced to pour over the

world from the mines of California and Australia, the economists and learned societies of the day were filled with alarm lest the flood of metal should so depreciate its value as to sweep away property and accumulated savings, and reduce the Western world to a condition of chaos. The writings and sayings of Chevallier, Cobden, Jevons, and others are well known in this connection. The gloomy forebodings of the economists, however, were not fulfilled, for although there was a very marked depreciation of gold, the fall was soon arrested. How it was that the best economists of the day proved to be so far out in their prognostications has been the subject of many inquiries since. Their theories were unimpeachable, and most of the facts upon which they based their conclusions were also beyond question. There were two or three matters, so it turned out, the importance of which Chevallier and others failed to appreciate accurately. One of these was the magnitude of the then existing stocks of metallic money in relation to that of the new supplies; a second was the magnitude of the increased demands for money consequent upon the rapid development of America and Australia. A third, and the most important of all, was the part played by India in this connection. Scared at the prospect of rapid depreciation of gold, the Government of India by an Ordinance dated the 22nd of December, 1852, declined to receive any more gold mohurs at their treasuries. The peoples of India were therefore restricted by Government's interposition to silver for their chief monetary instrument. From early times the demands of the East for the precious metals have been an important factor in determining the effects of supplies upon price levels. After the suppression of the Sepoy Mutiny, the trade of India expanded rapidly, and the demand for Indian cotton, consequent upon the de-

iciency of American cotton during the Civil War in the United States, turned the balance of trade heavily in favor of India. Silver poured into India in phenomenal quantities, so much so that the Bombay Chamber of Commerce in 1864 feared "that the continued movement of silver to India must bring destruction to the silver standards of all other nations." As a matter of fact, the enormous withdrawals of money from Europe in response to the demands of India very largely counteracted the effects of the great flood of money flowing into Europe from the mines of California and Australia. In short, it was the unexpectedly heavy demand for metallic money in the East that explains the failure of the economists to measure the probable extent of the fall in gold which the phenomenal output from the mines of America and Australia seemed certain to produce.

And just as India proved the saviour of Europe fifty years ago by arresting a distortion in the public measure of value that might have paralyzed large sections of the peoples of the West, so, too, at the present day, when a similar distortion is again threatened, India can once more come to the rescue by drawing off a substantial volume of the present flood of gold. By a strange irony of fate, it happened that the Government of India in the early nineties were once again scared at the prospect of a serious depreciation of their currency—silver, this time—and, backed by the authority of a committee of London experts, they suddenly closed their mints in 1893 to the free coinage of the white metal. A gold standard with, if possible, a gold currency was the policy then adopted. At the time, public opinion in India was by no means unanimous as to the wisdom of this step, but subsequent events—in particular the chronic mismanagement of both reserves and currency, and the

complete and constant subordination of India's interests to the requirements of the London money market—have brought the peoples of India to the conclusion that the sooner they adopt gold money, in practice as well as in theory, the better. All the chambers of commerce of India are unanimous in their demands that a substantial portion of the Indian Gold Standard Reserve should be held in gold, in India; whilst so able and prominent a man of commerce as Sir Vithaldas Thackersey has just proposed, at the Imperial Council in Calcutta, that the use of gold in India should be encouraged by the minting in India of distinctively Indian gold coins of smaller value than the English sovereign—a proposal which the Finance Minister, Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, very wisely promised should have his most careful consideration.

Remembering the magnitude of the deluge of gold that is now threatening the world, remembering that the first effects of this deluge have already made their appearance in a depreciation of the metal—a distortion of our monetary measure that involves cruel injustices to all the poorer classes of the Empire—recalling to mind, too, that Government have declared in favor of gold for India's monetary standard and currency system, and were, in fact, only a few years ago doing their utmost to introduce sovereigns into circulation, it might be thought that the present demand for gold from India would have been received by Lord Morley and Lord Crewe with open arms. Strange to relate, precisely the opposite effect has been produced. No sooner has India definitely decided that she will take all the gold that she can get, than the Secretary of State has exerted every influence in his power to prevent a single sovereign flowing eastward! Treating his annual budgets as so much waste paper, he has trans-

ferred from the treasuries of the great dependency in his charge into the coffers of his bankers in London, millions after millions in excess of his estimated requirements, till at the present moment not only is there no reserve of gold worth talking about in India in the Gold Standard Reserve, but over six millions sterling of India's Paper Currency Reserve (a paper currency that only circulates and is redeemable in India) has also been transferred to England and invested in home securities—much to the relief of the London money market.

The explanation of this extraordinary action of the Secretary of State for India—this sudden throwing to the winds of his principles of the last fifteen years, is to be found in the attitude of mind of the London money market. Although the world's output of gold during the last ten years has exceeded seven hundred and fifty millions sterling, this vast volume of metal has not come into the coffers of the British Empire, but has gone elsewhere, chiefly to the United States, Russia, France, Argentina, Italy, and Brazil. Notwithstanding the unparalleled volume of business now being transacted by the aid of the London money market, we stand at the bottom of the list of great nations in the matter of gold reserves. Thus the reserves of gold held by the treasuries and national banks of some of the chief countries in the world on the 31st of December 1910 were as under:

	£
The United States . . . . .	263,241,000
France . . . . .	131,177,000
Russia . . . . .	130,476,000
Austria . . . . .	55,023,000
Italy . . . . .	48,363,000
Argentina . . . . .	37,033,000
Germany . . . . .	33,052,000
Australasia . . . . .	31,820,000
England . . . . .	31,356,000

London being the greatest free market in the world for gold, the world

naturally takes much of its gold from that centre. In this arrangement London acquiesces, though not without constant alarms, it being everywhere recognized that, with so huge a superstructure of credit balanced on so slender a basis of gold, the sudden withdrawal of a few millions might affect to greater or less degree the trading transactions of the whole kingdom. That the London bankers, whilst allowing all foreign nations to withdraw from them such gold as may be required from time to time, should use their influence to prevent their largest, wealthiest, and most valuable dependency from enjoying the same facility; that a financial paper of the standing of the *Statist* should lend its editorial columns to the furtherance of this selfish and short-sighted policy; and, lastly, that the Secretary of State for India should join in the game by transferring India's cash balances to London for the convenience of the London money market, thus deferring, perhaps checking, the natural flow of gold to India, can only be regarded as an Imperial scandal, for which we shall inevitably pay a heavy penalty in the loss of the respect and support of the moderate and best leaders of public opinion in India. In addition to and apart from these grave considerations, the policy of attempting to check the flow of gold to the East at a time when a phenomenal output of the precious metal is threatening a serious distortion of the gold moneys of the West, is so stupid, so futile, and so fraught with cruel injustice to the poorer classes of the Empire, as to bring upon the financiers and politicians of Great Britain the condemnation of the whole world, directly the true bearings of their present gold policy are detected and understood.

In the meantime, on rolls the flood in gathering volume, slowly creeping over the civilized world, quietly obliterating

effort after effort, and threatening in the end to undermine the very foundations of our social and political existence. During the next ten years a thousand millions sterling or more of the glittering metal will be added to the volume of gold already unearthed. And in the following decade, another thousand millions; and so on. The watery deluge of Biblical record was a swift and merciful punishment for erring mankind, compared with the prolonged anguish which a wide realization of the meaning of this golden flood must bring. To the rich minority far removed from the forefront of life's battle, the loss of substantial portions of their accumulated wealth consequent upon the shrinkage in the value of money is not a pleasant prospect. To the poor majority (including those thirteen millions of our home population who are always on the verge of starvation), a continuation of the rise in prices now in progress will mean not merely the stereotyping of the unsatisfactory conditions amidst which they are at present living, but an increase in the severity of their struggle for existence that can only result in the untimely downfall of large numbers of the more unfortunate.

And whilst this situation is slowly developing, the firstfruits of the fall in gold are already being reaped. The speculator, the financier, the banker, the transporter, the merchant, the employer of labor, and even the laborer himself are all delighted at the improvement in trade. An inflation of prices invariably stimulates industry—at first; and increased industry with increased trade spell increased profits and increased money for all—depreciated money, it is true; but who notices the shrinkage in the *value* of the counters when their *numbers* show such gratifying increases! A fool's paradise is a delightful place to live in—for the fools; but the awakening comes at last

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with its disillusionment, its disappointment, its despair. And in the case of our shrunken sovereign the awakening may be indeed bitter. Then, the multitude of fixed-wage earners will realize that all their past efforts to improve their condition have been in vain. Then, the unreasoning masses will turn upon the already depleted classes with greater vindictiveness than ever. Strikes, over-speculation, panics and financial crisis—these will be the symptoms. And should the deluge still continue, the forces which make for cohesion and order in the State must be seriously dissipated till, at length, our whole Western civilization may be in danger of a lapse from which it may take centuries to recover.

With some knowledge of what may conceivably overtake us, is it too much to hope that science and patriotism will combine to meet the situation? We do not drain and improve our lands by declining to recognize the excess of water lodged thereon, but by constructing channels to carry off the surplus moisture. So, too, we cannot expect to maintain our economic and social health by shutting our eyes to the unprecedented flood of gold that is now affecting us, but by creating channels and reservoirs whereby the deluge can be diverted and stored for the subsequent use and benefit of mankind as a whole. Such reservoirs and channels are possible in the shape of gold reserves—political and commercial—in the United Kingdom and other parts of the Empire, and increased facilities and opportunities for encouraging the flow of gold to India and the East. Other tropical dependencies than India might also be introduced to the benefits of the British sovereign, should the off-take by India prove insufficient to keep the flood down. Here is the remedy. It is for Great Britain to apply it.

*M. de P. Webb.*

*Karachi, India.*

## A CHRISTMAS EVE UNDER THE TERROR.

BY PAUL BOURGET.

Whilst spending a short time at Nemours I paid a visit to the Château of Fleury-des-Tours, so called to distinguish it from the Fleury near Courance, in which the Pretender Charles Edward once took refuge, which is built of brick; whereas the former is a gem of sixteenth-century stone architecture well known to connoisseurs. I need not pause to discuss here the much-disputed point whether Fleury-les-Tours, built under the auspices of the first Duc de Fleury, the favorite of Louis XII., did or did not serve as a model for its double at Azay-le-Rideau, nor need I attempt to solve the problem so long debated in Paris clubs as to the right of the present owner to call himself Duc de Fleury, which for some hundred and fifty years has been contested by the other branch of the family. Whether the title does or does not belong to him, he bears it full worthily, and turns to admirable account the large fortune he has inherited from his mother, who was a daughter of one of the famous glass-founders of the district. The Duc, moreover, has had the good sense to look after his interests himself instead of trusting them to an intermediary, and for forty years he superintended in person the vast works he owns near St. Quentin, which are now looked after by his eldest son, so that he himself is left free to follow his hobby. This is to collect beautiful works of art, that are housed in surroundings thoroughly in keeping with them; the decorative details of the interior, such as the carvings on the doors and mullions of the windows, being as noteworthy in their way as is the château itself. The Duc delights in showing off his treasures; and this is how it came about that, having been introduced to me by some mutual

friends, he invited me to come and see them, although I do not pretend to be a connoisseur. I must pass lightly over the wonderful weapons, pictures, &c., that he showed me, for, truth to tell, I have forgotten all about them; and the only thing I really remember is a little canvas I noticed in my host's bedroom, and that not because of its æsthetic value—though it was a fine piece of work by an anonymous French artist of the seventeenth century—but because of the story connected with it. It is this way of looking at things that chiefly distinguishes a writer from an artist; and the mistake the Romantic school made was the attempt to combine these two irreconcilable types of intelligence.

But to return to the picture which I paused to look at. It was of a sufficiently hackneyed subject, just a "Nativity," the execution of which showed a practised hand, for it still makes a strong appeal to the spectator in spite of the changes in taste that have come about since it was painted. St. Joseph, the Virgin, the ox, the ass, and the Holy Child lying asleep on the straw, were treated with a boldness of touch betraying the influence of Philippe de Champagne, combined with a realism evidently learnt in Flanders. One detail of great originality revealed the imagination of a poet. The scene was laid as usual in a humble stable, lighted by a single window framed by two bars cutting each other at right-angles, and the shadow of this frame was thrown upon the whitewashed wall in the background in such a manner that it formed a magnified cross, phantom-like, but perfectly distinct, the base resting just above the cradle in which the Divine Child peacefully slept. Most painful was the contrast between the cross and the quiet slum-

Translated by Mrs. Arthur Bell.



ber, the presage of future anguish and the sense of present security. I was deeply interested in the painting for a double reason, for, as I gazed at it, I recognized it as one I had seen before. Yes, I was already familiar with the grouping of the figures and with the reflection of the window in the form of a cross upon the white wall. Without stopping to think, I mentioned the name of the owner of the picture I remembered, and the Duc at once said: "Your memory serves you well. Mme. de —," and he repeated the name I had used, which I need not give here, "has a copy of that painting." No collector cares to own his own possession is a replica; and he went on to tell me of several other copies, adding: "but this is undoubtedly the original that was left by my grandfather to my father, the eldest of his four children. He had three copies made—one for each of my uncles and one for my aunt. Did not Madam explain why?" And on my reply in the negative, he added, with a kind of haughty bitterness: "Well, that's only natural. When you have consented to serve the Revolution certain memories may well make you feel ashamed." The father of Madame was, as is well known, in the diplomatic service under Napoleon. I forgot to mention that the ducal owner of the glass factories is one of the irreconcilable Legitimists who, but for the command issued by the Prince, who rests at Gœritz, would never have accepted the fusion of the two Royalist parties. He then went on to say: "I have not the same motives for being silent about the episode which makes this little picture valuable as a relic. Let me lend you the pamphlet in which I have had printed the passage from my grandfather's will explaining the bequest. You can read it on your way home. You will find it quite as interesting as a magazine story, and at the rate we are going now it seems only

too probable that it is very much like what you will read in the magazines of the near future."

Did the owner of the "Nativity" exaggerate when he spoke in such terms of the story connected with it and with a critical moment in the life of his ancestor? Let the reader judge for himself. The Duc having given me full permission to use the document, I will quote it verbatim. In such troubled times as those we are now passing through it is just as well to remember how terrible to many private individuals were the results of certain social doctrines then advocated; and we who can remember the Commune are able to realize to a great extent the feelings of those who lived under the Terror. The title given by its owner to the tale is: "Note left by my grandfather for his eldest son to explain the codicil of his will relative to a picture by an anonymous artist representing a 'Nativity.'"

Forty years have passed since Christmas, 1793, when I went through the anguish I am now (1833) about to describe, yet no single detail of my experiences then has ever faded from my memory. I have but to shut my eyes to see again distinctly a plain, white with snow, bounded on either side by mountains, a road deserted but for a few foot-passengers, or more rarely one or two horsemen passing between the leafless trees beneath a livid sky, in which the sun appeared like a ball of fire. Again I see a carriage rolling across the desolate landscape in an atmosphere as sinister as that beneath which all France was brooding. The vehicle jolted along a road, the deep ruts in which were typical of the heedlessness of the Revolution, and in it sat a man of thirty and a young woman of twenty. That man, my son, was your father, and that woman your mother, and your birth was imminent,

so that the journey would in any case have been a specially trying one for her; but her determination not to add to my anxieties made her put a brave face on the matter. She would smile up in my face pathetically and say, "Don't worry about me, dear; I shall be all right. We are very near the frontier now; God would not let anything go wrong at the last minute."

It really was wonderful that we had managed to traverse unmolested the many miles between Fleury-les-Tours and the little town of Franche-Comté we were now approaching. This was Morteau, only eight leagues from Locle, and less than a day's journey from La Chaux-de-Fonds and Switzerland. We had decided to escape from France by that out-of-the-way route, after starting by the usual one *via* Châlons and Nancy. Oh, how bitterly I was reproaching myself for not having emigrated sooner as we crept painfully along through the bitter cold of the dreary afternoon, in a carriage bought in a hurry for the dangerous trip, peering anxiously into the face of everyone we passed, yet striving to seem quite easy in our minds. It was not that I was blind, as were so many others, to what was before us, for from the first I had always felt sure that sooner or later the tempest that had burst upon my unhappy country would overwhelm me and mine. But in 1791 I met Mlle. de Molssens and fell in love with her, lingering near her instead of making my escape whilst there was still time. My beloved Henriette had lost her father, and lived with her invalid mother in a little château not very far from my home. I at once constituted myself the protector of the two ladies, and for some time neither they nor I were molested. I had proposed for the hand of Henriette and had been accepted. We were betrothed, and soon afterwards married. Week by week we lingered, absorbed

in each other, until that terrible month of January when the trial and execution of the King ushered in the truly awful period so justly called the Terror. Directly I heard the appalling news I said "We must go!" but just then Mme. de Molssens became much worse. A stroke of paralysis made it impossible to move her, and so, whether we would or no, we were compelled to remain where we were. I could not screw up my courage to tell my wife that we should only lose our own lives without saving that of her mother. In August the invalid passed away; and although we were thus free to consider what was best for ourselves, we actually put off starting again, for we foolishly came to the conclusion that the Château of Fleury, like several others equally out of the way, had been overlooked by the Jacobins of Nemours. There did not seem to be any energetic revolutionary leader in our neighborhood, and as the law about the property of *émigrés* was very stringently enforced, and we had nothing in the world but our two châteaux and their dependences, we did not want to risk losing them. Henriette thought it would be better to wait till after our little one was born; and oh, how terribly I was to regret yielding to her natural wish that the great event should take place at home. A thunderbolt suddenly aroused us from our false security.

One morning a representative of the people arrived at Nemours, bringing with him a list of the owners of property in and near the town, that practically amounted to a proscription of them all. An old retainer of my family brought me the news that warrants of arrest were about to be issued for all "suspects," and, of course, I should be one among the very first to be taken. The urgency of the danger allowed no further hesitation, and this was how it came about that we were

on our way to Switzerland on this afternoon of late December. A passport in the names of Citizen and Citizeness Chardon, procured by the faithful fellow who had warned me, had enabled us to perform in safety the earlier stages of the long and perilous journey. We figured in this document, bearing the stamp of the Municipality of Nemours, as a native of Switzerland and his wife returning home on account of the health of the latter; and the very clumsiness of the disguise had been the secret so far of its success, for who would have supposed that a Duc de Fleury would have taken no more precautions than I had to throw his pursuers off the scent. But the question was, would this flimsy bit of paper suffice to get us across the frontier? I repeated this inquiry over and over again with ever-increasing anguish of anxiety as I searched the distance for the first sight of the little town of Mortcau, that was to be the scene of the last act in the drama of our salvation.

It was about four o'clock, and already nearly dark, when I finally made out its outlines against the sombre sky, the gloomy masses of the houses presenting an appearance so sinister that I was seized with fresh apprehension at the thought of having to present my false passport to the authorities in it. The longing to escape the ordeal led to my making the wildest possible suggestion under the circumstances to my companion; for I said to her:

"Do you feel equal to walking for about two hours?"

"Yes," she at once replied, but the expression of her face ought to have warned me that she was not fit to walk, and my only excuse is that when one is fleeing for life everything else is forgotten. "It will be the last effort we shall have to make," I said, "and it really will be the best thing to do."

So I tapped on the window, and

when the coachman asked what I wanted, I told him to stop. I had engaged the man when I bought the carriage at Dijon because he looked such a fool, and I often wondered what he thought of the travellers he was driving. I had done my best to allay any suspicions he might have formed of us, and as we got out of the carriage it struck me that it was rather mad of me, when we were so near the end of the journey, to give him cause to wonder about us; yet that was the very thing I did when I made him pull up half a league from Morteau and said to him: "I shall not want you any longer: my wife and I would rather walk the rest of the way. You can keep the carriage and horses, and I will give you more than I had bargained for"—placing a roll of louis d'or in his hand—"if you return at once by the way we came; but," I added, drawing a pistol from my pocket and pointing it at him—"if not——"

The poor fellow began to tremble in every limb, and cried, "I will obey you, sir; I will obey you!"

"Well, be off at once," I said. "I have your name and address. I will write later and tell you where to send the things I have left in the carriage, but if in six months you do not hear from me you can have them all."

The man murmured his thanks, and then helped me to hoist on to my shoulders a sort of knapsack containing a few absolute necessities. I had ten other rolls of louis d'or and some diamonds in my belt to meet further contingencies. I waited, with the pistol still levelled, until the coachman had resumed his seat on the box and turned the weary horses round, evidently very much to their disgust, when they had expected to be led to a stable for the rest they badly needed. So eager, however, was their driver to be out of reach of my weapon that he managed to urge them into a gallop, and Hen-

riette and I were soon left alone.

We had only to walk round the outskirts of the town to find ourselves in Switzerland, and the brave girl declared she was ready to start; so we set off in the direction of Morteau, intending to branch off into the first path we came to on the right or the left. We had not gone many yards, however, before it became evident that my companion had overrated her strength, for she began to droop; and though she managed to get a little farther, she was soon compelled to stop, and, sinking down on a stone by the wayside, she burst into tears.

Presently she looked up at me and said, in a voice broken with sobs, "I really cannot walk any farther. You must leave me and get some sort of vehicle. I wish you had not sent the carriage away." Then, as she realized that she was reproaching me, she added, "Oh, darling, you must not mind what I say." But as the full danger of our situation was borne in upon her, she cried, "But they will come and take you, and you will be guillotined; oh, escape now whilst there is still time!"

"What!" I exclaimed, "and desert you! What are you thinking of? I should not dream of leaving you for a moment even, unless to get help of some kind; but where to seek it I have not the faintest notion." I sat down beside my poor young wife and made her rest her head on my shoulder. Nestling against me, she gradually became calmer, and presently she seemed to sink into a kind of unconsciousness. Her breathing became regular, and I began to hope that if she could sleep for an hour we might yet manage the rest of the walk. I was young and strong, and could carry her at least for part of the way.

As we sat thus, in absolute silence, I suddenly heard the rattling of wheels in the distance, and I thought to myself: "That's our own carriage com-

ing back perhaps. Our man has made a *détour* to the town, denounced us there, and is bringing some one with him to arrest us; but never mind, so long as he takes us somewhere where Henriette can rest, nothing else will matter"; and I said to her, in as reassuring a voice as I could, "I think I hear something coming; you stop quietly here and I will go and reconnoitre."

There, then, was I, not an hour after dismissing, at the risk of our lives, a carriage I had bought and a coachman I had hired, on whom I could to a certain extent depend, hurrying in the gathering gloom, like some highway robber, to stop an unknown traveller with whom I might have to fight for my safety and that of my dear one. Truly, I fully deserved any punishment that might fall on me for my stupidity at a critical moment. Punishment, however, as you will see, was not to overtake me yet, for the traveller turned out to be nobody more formidable than a middle-aged peasant-woman driving herself home in a cart drawn by a sorry nag and laden with vegetables. She was evidently rather afraid herself of meeting with an unpleasant adventure, but five minutes' talk with me reassured her, and she expressed herself quite ready to take us along with her.

"Get in, Madame," she said to Henriette, "and you, too, Monsieur; but don't say a word when we come to the entrance to the town. They would guess at once that you don't belong here, or, for that matter, to Switzerland. I'll say you are my cousins," she added, "and I'll take you to my sister. You can lodge with her. Her master is away, but before he left he told her to be sure and take in any *ci-devants* who happened to pass this way."

I love to quote the very words of this Mère Poirier, as she was called.

and to write down her humble name as a proof that there were still some good folks left in what was once the hospitable land of France. Oh, if only the whole country, men and women, had but risen in one mass against the wretched tyrants in power—who, after all, were but a handful of cowards—what a difference it would have made! What these men really were came out clearly enough when they were brought face to face with Napoleon; but in '93 all that good men and true could do was to die and forgive their murderers.

"Who is your sister's master?" I asked Mère Poirier, as we set off, taking no notice of the significant term *ci-devants* applied to us; for what would have been the good of a discussion with the market-woman? We were, of course, entirely at her mercy.

"He is M. François, the *curé* of Morteau," she replied.

"And he has gone away?"

"Yes, Monsieur, never to return. He was arrested, and has been guillotined!"

On hearing these terrible words, poor Henriette uttered a little cry and pressed closely against me, but Mère Poirier, absorbed in guiding her old horse through the darkness, did not notice these signs of agitation, and increased my wife's emotion by going on to say:

"They are really not so bad at Morteau, but there is Raillard. . . ."

"And who is Raillard?" I inquired.

"What! you don't know Raillard?" she exclaimed. "But, of course, you don't belong to this district. Well, you know, they say he can do just what he likes even in Paris. He's the doctor here, or, rather," correcting herself, "he used to be. Nobody goes to him now, but everybody consults M. Couturier."

"Raillard, then, is the leader of the Jacobins in Morteau? Is he President of the Jacobin Club?" I inquired.

"You know him after all, then!" she

retorted. "Why did you pretend you didn't?" and in spite of the darkness I thought I detected a defiant gleam in the woman's eyes. The sister of the servant of the guillotined *curé* perhaps suspected the Duc de Fleury of being a spy. How significant, if it were so, of the time when the proscribed often dared not trust each other! The impression, if the good soul ever entertained it, must, however, have been entirely removed when the gate of the little town was reached, for my wife's convulsive shuddering must have convinced her that we were indeed fugitives in the grip of the terrors of mortal danger.

When we were safely past the barrier, Mère Poirier said to Henriette: "Well, to be sure, though it's not much of a compliment to me, I was main glad to see how terrified you were when I called out to the gatekeeper, 'These are my cousins!' If he knew what I had said to you about Raillard I should be sent to join the good M. François, and I have a husband and two children. I'd like to live to see better times with them. But we are very near my sister's now. She is left in peace because she was the foster-sister of the late Mme. Raillard. Just because of that, Raillard has spared her; and once upon a time, you know, he really was a good fellow. I think it may have been the death of his wife that unsettled his brain, so that he was ready to take in these horrid new ideas. He never drinks anything but water and he eats next to nothing—lives in his books in fact; he has two rooms choke full of them. Now can you explain his being so wicked when he knows so much? There's Jeannot, you see," she added, pointing with her whip at the horse; "he can't read, but he knows all he needs to. And there's my sister's door; look, he stops of his own accord: I have not moved the reins. Yes, old chap, we have arrived.



Another quarter of an hour and you will be munching your oats."

Whilst listening to this artless prattle it was my turn to tremble, as I pictured Raillard to myself, a man of the most dangerous revolutionary type, a regular fanatic; upright enough in private life—perhaps, indeed, even refined and sensitive, as proved by the grief he had felt for the loss of his wife. Yet when the application of his revolutionary ideas was in question the lives of others were of absolutely no account. As for accounting for the tolerance shown by him to the servant of the Abbé François in the way Mère Poirier explained it, that was all very well for such a simple soul as she evidently was; but I could not help being afraid that the house of Mlle. Bouveron—that was her sister's name—was really being used as a kind of trap. No doubt a close surveillance of it kept account of the coming and going of all visitors; but I must add that never for one moment did any suspicion cross my mind that the sisters had the faintest inkling of any such thing. They were just true-hearted humble folk who judged others by themselves; and my one prayer for them has always been that God may give them the reward of the Good Samaritan. But even if they had been agents of the Jacobin Club, I had no choice but to accept their aid, for it was quite impossible for us to go farther with my wife in the state she was. She seemed better than before we were taken up by the cart, but there was no telling how long her comparative calm would last. Fortunately, Mlle. Bouveron received us very kindly, and from glances she and her sister exchanged I saw that they realized the situation. We had not been in the house many minutes before they persuaded Henriette to go to the room which they told us was always kept ready for fugitives, and presently Mère Poirier came down and told me a doc-

tor ought to be sent for at once. I must go, she explained, to M. Couturier, who was taking Raillard's practice, and she would send a little girl to show me the way to his house. It was not far off, and it was with a trembling hand that I knocked at the door, my heart beating like a sledge-hammer as I waited for a response. Once more as I write I see the steep street all white with snow and my guide in her sombre clothes, and hear the high-pitched voice of the woman in charge, who, without showing herself—possibly because she was nervous in those troubled times— informed me that Citizen Couturier was not at home.

"When will he be back?" I asked.

"Not until to-morrow," was the reply. "He went this afternoon to Valdahon to see one of his patients who is not expected to live. He will remain with him all night."

"But," I cried, "the case I have come about can't wait. I want him to come to my wife, who is expecting her first child every moment. How far is it from here to Valdahon?"

"Eight leagues and a-half; but it's no good your thinking of fetching him. It's a dark night, the roads are awfully bad, the doctor's horse is the only one that's any use on them, and of course it is out there with him."

"But to whom do you go in emergencies such as this?" I went on. "Has not M. Couturier an assistant who represents him in his absence? If anyone is dangerously ill, whom do you send for?"

"Why, for Raillard," replied the woman in a voice that betrayed her horror of the name, which sent a worse shiver through me than the bitter blast of the night wind, from which I had no protection, as I had rushed off without my coat.

Reassured by what I had said, the woman now came down the steps holding a lantern above her head, its light

throwing her agitated features into relief. Evidently the mere mention of the Terrorist had filled her with dread. "It is three years," she said, "since Citizen Raillard has practised, but he arranged with my master that he might be sent for in his absence if anything very pressing occurred; but if only you could wait a few hours Citizen Couturier is sure to be back."

Wait till to-morrow! Oh, if only I could! For the thought of calling in Raillard and having to show him the false passport simply appalled me. To do so would mean to sign the death-warrant not only of my beloved wife and myself, but of our unborn little one. Yet could I let my darling die for want of the help given at such times to the poorest women? But it was not only of ourselves that I thought. Even in my own agony of anxiety I remembered that for Raillard to enter Mlle. Bouveron's humble home might get her and the sister who had done so much for us into very serious trouble; for arrest and the guillotine were the fate of all who tried to aid *ci-devants* to escape. No, I could not do it; and I hurried back to see if Henriette was feeling any better, and could perhaps after all wait for a doctor till the next day.

Alas! I was met on the threshold by Mlle. Bouveron, who had been watching for me, and cried almost before I was within hearing distance: "Well, is he coming? Madame is very ill. Isn't Citizen Couturier with you?"

Then, when I told her how the matter stood, and mentioned Raillard's name, she gave a cry of horror. "Raillard! Raillard! He it was who had my dear master arrested and guillotined. Why, if he only knew you and your wife were here it would mean death to you both."

What was I to do? I went up to see my wife, who clung to me weeping, declaring she was going to die. I did

all I could to comfort her, succeeding better than I had hoped, for as she lay in my arms she gradually became quieter, and soon actually fell asleep. Unclasping her hands from my neck as gently as I could, I laid her back on her pillows and returned to our hostess, feeling somewhat reassured, but as I was beginning to speak to her, there was a cry from above. The good woman hastened upstairs, leaving me behind in a state of mind better imagined than described, and I paced up and down the narrow room struggling to discover some way out of the terrible difficulty. All of a sudden an awful idea occurred to me. I remembered that I had my pistols with me, and, scarcely knowing what I did, I took one of them out of my knapsack and laid it on the table. It was loaded, and in it was a safe refuge from such a death as Henriette and I must die if Raillard knew of our presence at Morteau. If it really came to be a choice between the death of my wife and sending for him, I would myself give her rest from suffering, and immediately follow her. I made sure that the weapon was properly primed, and waited. Yes, my son, on Christmas Eve, 1793, I, the father you believe to be incapable of crime, meditated a double murder, to be succeeded by suicide; and but for what seemed at the time a trifling incident I should have carried out my horrible purpose. Now you will understand why I set such store on the little sacred picture I bequeath to you and ask you to hang it where you can see it constantly, and thank God Who, by its means, saved your father from a doom too awful for words.

After I had come to this resolution I felt a little less desperate, and crept upstairs to look once more upon the form I loved so well. The room in which your mother lay was very dark, and I could only dimly make out that

she seemed to be in a kind of stupor, and that Mlle. Bouveron was seated beside the bed holding her hand. Taking the single candle that dimly illuminated the melancholy scene, I held it up so that the light should fall upon Henriette's face, and as I did so I noticed a canvas hanging in a kind of alcove, containing the *prie-dieu* at which the martyr to whom the room had belonged must often have knelt. That canvas was a "Nativity," and why the sight of it should have affected me as it did it is impossible to explain. As you know, before my marriage I had rather lost my faith in all that the scene here represented symbolized; but the simple piety of her whom I had made up my mind to destroy had done much to restore my old belief, and now by the mercy of God a complete revulsion took place in my mind. Between the subject of the picture and the experiences we were going through, the analogy was so close that I should in any case have been struck with it, but now it almost overwhelmed me as I read the words beneath the beautiful group: "And Mary brought forth her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn." The child about to be brought into the world now was our first-born, and we, too, his parents, were wanderers from afar, sheltered in a refuge we had accidentally found. I looked more closely at the painting, and noticed that the artist had contrived that Mary and Joseph should see the future instrument of their son's death above his cradle. The singular device of throwing the shadow of the window-frame in the form of a cross upon the opposite wall would perhaps at any other time have aroused only a languid interest, but, moved as I now was to the very depths of my being, the lesson it was meant to teach came home to me with irresistible

force. How long I gazed at the parents, the sleeping Child, and the cross rising up as if to guard His slumber, I do not know; but was I really looking at them still, or absorbed in listening to a voice from an invisible source, that whispered "Ecce Homo! Behold the Man!"?

After all, I reflected, birth is always fraught with peril. In sorrow we enter, in sorrow we leave the world. The parents of the Holy Child accepted without a murmur the shadow that brooded over Him. The Child Himself accepted it and slept peacefully. One and all they were content to face the future with all its known and unknown possibilities, secure in their faith in a higher Power. The sword would pierce the heart of the mother, as she knew full well, yet she did not shrink; the heart of her husband would be torn in sympathy with her, yet, though he foresaw the suffering, he did not rebel. The sleeping Child was to know the greatest agony, to endure mental and bodily torture, to be deserted by His friends, to submit to the kiss of the betrayer, the insults of the people, the scourging, the nailing upon the cross, the long horrors of martyrdom upon it, before the final thrust of the spear released His anguished soul. All this is prefigured by the play of light and shade forming a cross upon the wall, and the Victim knows it, yet gives no sign of revolt against a fate so cruel. But thou! Oh, coward, coward!

In recalling these impressions after so many years, I am perhaps exaggerating their distinctness; but for all that, what I have just said truly expresses the feelings that stirred me as I looked at the picture, before I turned away from it to go and stand beside the bed where my wife still lay quiet and unconscious. I gazed at her for a few moments, my whole view of the situation completely changed, and then

said somewhat abruptly to Mlle. Bouveron:

"Where does Raillard live? I will go and fetch him."

"What?" was the astonished reply. "You will bring him here? Oh, do not dream of doing that. We shall all be lost if he knows that you are here, and that I have been hiding you."

"Where is he to be found?" I repeated. "Can't you see that my wife will die if I do not get a doctor for her? You have been very good to us," I added, "and I should indeed be sorry to bring danger upon you, but I will say that I threatened you; and compelled you to take us in: If I am arrested, you shall not be a loser; and here is something to pay you for your risk and trouble," and I drew from my pocket one of the bags in which my diamonds were sewn up.

The good woman pushed it away with an indignant gesture, and at that moment Henriette suddenly woke from her insensibility, and began to cry aloud for help.

"I'll tell you where Citizen Raillard lives," said Mlle. Bouveron hastily, "but remember I warned you. If you do not return I will do my best for Madame. It is Christmas Eve," she added, glancing up at the picture. "May the Holy Mother protect us!"

I hurried away, thinking as I went how little the good martyred *curé* of Morteau had dreamt when he bought the "Nativity"—as I afterwards learnt, from a brother priest in need—and hung it in his room, that the sacred relic would not only sustain the courage of the humble peasant-woman who had inherited it, but would also play an important part in such a psychological crisis as that through which I had just passed! It was a comfort to me to hear Mlle. Bouveron make the confident appeal to the Holy Mother, and truly I needed something to console me

in the enterprise in which I was engaged.

I did not fully realize all my temerity till I found myself face to face with the redoubtable Jacobin, from whom I hoped to obtain medical help. Was he really still a doctor—a pitiful healer of the woes of humanity?—that stern man seated in the dead of the night at a table laden with sinister-looking documents? Later I learnt a good deal about the system of which he was one of the trusted administrators.

The Jacobins had organized a secret police in certain districts, over which presided the most trusted members of their party. Generally quite unknown men, and of no definite profession, they were the true dictators of the terrible time through which we were passing. Even a Danton, a Saint-Just, or a Robespierre might well tremble before them, and from his little room at Morteau, Raillard exercised a kind of surveillance over the whole of Franche-Comté. He had probably just received information incriminating some of the so-called enemies of the Revolution, for the face he turned inquiringly on me as I entered was lit up with a savage joy. A proud intelligent face it was, difficult to associate with hatred and lust of blood, and his eyes seemed to radiate enthusiasm. Could it really be that they were constantly employed in the detestable work of a spy? the mere thought of which was enough to draw forth bitter tears of remorse. No! My intuition had not deceived me. Raillard was not a reckless gambler in human lives like Danton, not a jealous gloomy conspirator like Robespierre, nor a vulgar demagogue like the mean-spirited Fouquier-Tinville. He was perfectly honest in his criminal course of action. He really believed in the regeneration of France through the extirpation of what he looked upon as the element poisoning the national life. To guillotine an aris-

toerat seemed to him quite a legitimate action—as legitimate as any operation he had performed in his old profession as a doctor; much the same, in fact, as the amputation of a gangrened limb. A fixed idea with him was that it was his mission to effect the amputation of a huge portion of his fellow-countrymen, with a view to the radical cure of the rest of the body-politic. He received me like one who felt that life was not long enough to achieve all that he had it upon his conscience to get through, and his first words were:

"I am busy, citizen—very busy. I am working for my country. If you have anything to tell me that will serve its interests say it quickly, but if not . . ."

"My wife is dying," I answered, "and Citizen Courturier is away. They sent me to you."

"*They!* Who are they?" he inquired sternly; evidently this appeal to him as a doctor annoyed him extremely. . . . "And who might you be?" he added, eyeing me contemptuously and suspiciously.

I met his angry glances without flinching, although truth to tell, his expression was terrible enough. I read in it the skilled diagnosis of a medical practitioner utilized in the service of a bigoted fanaticism, but vividly present in my mind was the scene I had just left: my poor wife lying on her bed of pain, above which hung the "Nativity," making its mute but eloquent appeal, whilst beside the sufferer stood Mlle. Bouveron, trembling at the mere thought of my visit to him who had done her beloved master to death. Any slip on my part now would mean the betrayal of Henriette and the woman who had received her so kindly. I therefore calmly took from my pocket the slip of paper which declared me to be a native of Switzerland on my way home, and unfolded my fictitious story.

Raillard listened to me quietly, but without removing from my face his piercing blue eyes, which gleamed like cutting steel. When I ceased speaking, he inquired in a tone as severe as before:

"You arrived at Morteau this evening. Where did you sleep last night?"

"Near Besançon. I don't know the name of the place. I had come from the opposite direction."

"And the night before that?"

"At Besançon."

"At what inn?"

As he asked me these questions he began to fumble about with the papers on the table, and it was evident his suspicions were aroused. Probably amongst the scattered documents there was one describing us, and giving particulars of our flight. The state of health of my wife would afford all too easy a proof of our identity. I did not know the name of a single hotel at Besançon. But I was lost if I showed any hesitation; so I made a bold guess and said, "At the Hôtel de Paris."

What was my relief when Raillard left the statement unchallenged, and asked, "And where did you put up here?"

There was evidently then an Hôtel de Paris at Besançon; and, emboldened by this successful deception, I ventured to say at Mlle. Bouveron's; but I made up a plausible tale to account for our going to her, declaring that our travelling chaise had broken down just outside the town, and I had persuaded Mme. Poirier, who happened to be passing, to give us a lift in her cart, winding up by saying that she had taken us to her sister's house. It wasn't a very likely story, certainly, but not so wildly improbable as that I should have dared voluntarily to penetrate to the private sanctuary of the chief of the Jacobin secret police. Raillard had frowned, and his attitude had become threatening, when I mentioned the name of my



hostess; and when I ceased speaking he began hunting about amongst a pile of papers, finally picking out one which he read to himself in a low voice, looking up at me every now and then as if to compare me with the description given by his correspondent. Apparently that description was not very accurate, and my having passed through Besançon did not tally with what was said about my route. The instinct of self-preservation, innate in us all in times of danger, had made me guess at the trap laid for me in the simple questions as to where I had put up, and the same instinct revealed to me now that the Jacobin was hesitating how to act. The least thing would be enough to turn the scale one way or the other.

"You can verify all I have said to-morrow," I remarked, imitating his own brusque and surly manner; "but now, please to remember that every moment of delay may be fatal to my wife"; and I began to dwell upon the symptoms I had noticed which caused me special anxiety. As he listened, a strange change passed over Raillard, for, to my inexpressible relief, the old traditions of the doctor asserted themselves, and, after a short struggle between the Jacobin Terrorist and the man of healing, he began to question me about the patient, asking how old she was, how long we had been married, what sort of constitution she had, and so on. Gradually his face became transformed; all the sternness vanished, and presently he said:

"Well, let's be off; there is evidently no time to lose."

He had forgotten, if he had ever received, the note telling of the disappearance of the *ci-devant* Duc de Fleury and his wife; and I may add here that I had noticed the same kind of dual personality in several revolutionaries I had known, who sometimes reverted to what they were before 1789; but never had I witnessed such a complete meta-

morphosis as in Raillard's case. When half an hour later he was seated at my wife's bedside the Jacobin had entirely disappeared. Raillard was now a doctor and nothing else. He had evidently quite forgotten what house he was in and his share in the fate of its late master, but asked Mlle. Bouveron for all he wanted for his patient as if she were a nursing sister in the operating-room of a hospital. He never noticed that the servant of the guillotined *ouré* made no answer to anything he said to her, and that her hands shook with terror as she gave him what was necessary.

"I am afraid we shall have a fight for it," he whispered to me; "but I have all I want with me, and you had better leave her to me and this good woman now."

Reluctantly I withdrew, after fondly embracing my wife, who, though still scarcely conscious, seemed sensible that help had come. It was a terrible night I passed pacing up and down alone, my vigil broken only now and then by Mlle. Bouveron, who came to tell me how things were progressing. The doctor had been right. It was a terrible and long-protracted fight; but early on Christmas morning Raillard dashed into the room crying "All well—a boy!" grasping my hands in congratulation as if he were an old family friend instead of a deadly enemy.

"And Henriette," I cried—"is she out of danger? Will she live to see him grow up?"

"Of course she will," said the cutter-off of heads, a happy smile of triumph illuminating his features. "Come and see her, and the son and heir, but be careful not to excite her." Yes, it was Raillard who placed you, our first-born, in my arms; Raillard who remained with us for some hours after your birth to be at hand in case of need; and when he left he promised to look in again in the evening with Couturier to

coach him in the case before he himself withdrew. When he was gone, however, Mlle. Bouveron came to me and said:

"Now is the time for you to escape. If you wait till Madame is better it will be all over with you. Raillard will forget all about what has happened to-night and have you both arrested. It was much the same with M. François. When he was ill Raillard attended him and saved his life; but you know what he did afterwards. He seemed touched by Madame's sufferings, and even he could not very well send her to prison in her present state; but you may be very sure that you won't escape. He knows who you are well enough. I saw him examining the beautiful clothes I dressed the baby in, and he evidently noticed the ducal coronet embroidered on Madame's linen. See," she added, as she took up a dainty little garment, "how clear it is!"—and I realized how stupid it had been of us not to remember how incriminating such a detail would be; but in the hurry of our flight neither Henriette nor I had thought of it.

As Mlle. Bouveron went on, my blood froze in my veins, but I still clung desperately to one forlorn hope. I had seen two such totally different personalities appear in Raillard, according to whether he was approached as a doctor or a demagogue; he acted under different circumstances in a manner so diametrically opposed, that there surely must be a chance in this case of the triumph of the humane physician over the merciless revolutionary judge. No doubt he had noticed the ducal coronets in handling the linen he had used, some of which he had himself torn up for bandages, but he had acted as if he had not seen them. I could not help trusting that he would feel bound in honor not to turn to political account information he had obtained as a medical practitioner. But, however that

might be, whether the Jacobin respected professional etiquette or not, could I possibly dream of abandoning my wife and child and escaping alone? I therefore told Mlle. Bouveron to say no more about it, and took up my post by your mother's bedside to await the return of the much-dreaded doctor. My own feelings with regard to him were as contradictory as was his behaviour. He had saved my wife and child for me; but for all that, he was the pitiless enemy of the class to which I belonged. He had sent to death hundreds of nobles like myself and of priests like the Abbé François. Perhaps to-morrow it would be my turn to go to the scaffold at his order. I shrank from him in horror, but the tender compassion he had shown to Henriette in the awful night just over, drew me to him in spite of myself. I was really overwhelmed with the problem of this double nature, which struck me as a monstrous anomaly. I have often and often pondered over the riddle since, and it has made me hate the Revolution—all revolutions—worse than ever. Look at the pernicious effect they have had on individuals such, for instance, as that once worthy citizen Barnave, who might have been a good lawyer; Bailly, an excellent Academician spoiled; Collet d'Herbois, who had in him the making of a first-rate actor; Louis David, a master of the art of painting; and Raillard himself, a most efficient doctor,—one and all converted into criminals by a distorted way of looking at things. Free to use his great abilities to ameliorate the lot of others, he chooses to destroy rather than to save!

Watching beside my wife and child and pondering on the care lavished upon them by our dangerous benefactor all through the night before and the morning that was just over, I turned the problem over and over in my mind, realizing that my whole future depended on its solution. Which

would win in this strangely complex nature, professional feeling or fanaticism? In spite of all my anxiety, my thoughts, strange to say, continually reverted to the little sacred picture, the simple composition of which, with its beautiful and significant suggestion, had restored my courage the evening before and braced me up to face the situation bravely. The priest whose room we were in must often have gazed at the "Nativity" and been inspired, as I had been, by its spirit. Face to face with its shadowy cross upon the wall, I felt constrained to lift up my heart in prayer to God as if it were the very one on which the Lord had suffered, and as if the Child sleeping beneath it were the Saviour Himself. And so I waited through the long hours.

About four o'clock in the afternoon Raillard re-appeared accompanied by Dr. Couturier, to whose care he proposed entrusting his patient. My first glance at the Jacobin leader was enough to prove that Mlle. Bouveron had not been mistaken in what she had said. Raillard knew who I was, and the doctor had already given place to the hunter-down of aristocrats: not yet entirely, however, for, instead of sending his agents to arrest me, he had come himself. He did not say a word to me, but I saw again the steely sinister expression in his eyes that I had noticed at the beginning of our first interview. Couturier, on the other hand, was a typical man of drugs, with a naturally bright cheery manner tempered now by nervousness. He was evidently trembling with fear of Raillard. He had, I learnt later, been his assistant before 1789, and since he had taken his practice he had been in constant terror of becoming his victim; but he was certainly not, in any sense of the word, his accomplice. I could not, however, have guessed in the least how he felt by the way in which he returned my salutation, whilst there could be no doubt as

to Raillard's sentiments with regard to me: they were all too clearly revealed by the severity of his manner. I had resolved to stick to my assumed character; but when I mentioned the name I had taken to Couturier, I got a very malevolent look from his former employer, who, however, suddenly checked a threatening gesture, the doctor once more supplanting the Jacobin, for the eyes of his patient were fixed on his face. How would the strange struggle end? That I was very soon to find out, and I was at the same time to realize how fierce it had been.

Presently I was asked to withdraw for the two medical men to hold a consultation, and this lasted a whole hour, during which my state of mind may be imagined. At last the door opened, and to my surprise Couturier came in alone.

"Raillard went out the other way," he said; and then added in a whisper, as if he feared he might be overheard by the Terrorist through the walls: "I do not care to know who you are, but Raillard knows, and he would have arrested you to-day but for his sense of professional duty. I am certain of this because of the urgency with which he inquired whether I thought the patient was in a state to bear a great emotion without risk to her life. I saw at once that, after having attended her as a doctor, he felt a scruple at the idea of inflicting a mortal blow upon her. Oh, he is an extraordinary man: not in the least what you would suppose him to be if you judged him by certain of his actions! Five years ago he was the benefactor of Morteau, and even now, you see, out of respect to the memory of his wife, he has molested no one in this house, bequeathed by the *curé* to his servant."

"Yet he had M. François guillotined!" I exclaimed.

"So you have heard that? Yes, it was shocking! Shocking! But Rail-

lard thought it was his duty. He is convinced that the permanent happiness of mankind will be secured by certain executions. But there is no need to go into all that. What we have to think about now is your safety. As long as he thinks your wife in danger he will spare you; but how about afterwards?" and he shook his head despairingly.

"Thank you, doctor," I said, holding out my hand and pressing his warmly. "I guess you have exaggerated the symptoms of the patient with a view to impressing Raillard. But you will tell me the truth, will you not? Do you think that my wife is dangerously ill?"

"No," he said, "I do not. I differ from Raillard about her, and believe there is no fear of the brain fever he thinks excitement might bring on."

Greatly relieved, I abruptly asked him if he thought it would be possible to take her away on a stretcher that very night.

After a moment's reflection he replied, "It would be a great risk—yes, a most dangerous risk."

"But not," I urged, "an absolutely fatal one?"

"Well, I am not prepared to say." Then, after hesitating a bit, he added, "No, it's impossible—quite impossible. The best thing would be for you to escape alone."

"What!" I cried, "and leave her and the boy in the hands of a man who, when once she is well, will have her guillotined? You know there will be no safety for her when I am gone. Answer me truly now, is not Raillard quite capable of sending her to the scaffold when he no longer looks upon her as a patient? Come, answer me. Yes or No?"

"Yes," answered the doctor. Then, apparently terrified at his own audacity in speaking so freely, he said he must go and see my wife again before

he left for the night. As for me, my mind was made up. Raillard had spared me for the time because he knew I would never escape alone, and for this reason the house would probably not be very closely watched. As soon as Couturier was gone I would tell Mlle. Bouveron what I had decided to do, and get her to give the name and address of some one who could be absolutely relied upon to help me. The good woman quite agreed with me that to take my wife and child away at once was the very best thing to be done; and, in spite of her knowledge that it might bring the wrath of Raillard upon her, she was ready to do all in her power for us. When it was quite dark I let myself down from a window at the back of the house into a narrow alley, after making sure that there was no one in sight except a man seated in a little wine-shop close by, who allowed me to pass without challenge. A golden bribe induced the "friend" to whom Mlle. Bouveron had recommended me to undertake that he and a fellow-workman would be in the alley in question with a stretcher at midnight, and back again at our refuge I went up to prepare Henriette for what was before her. She was asleep, but I woke her up and explained everything as clearly as I could. She took it all beautifully, and only begged me to give her time to pray for strength to go through the terrible trial and to ask God to preserve us all. And it was with her eyes fixed upon the "Nativity" that she offered up these supreme petitions—an added reason for the value I set upon the little picture.

It seemed a long time before midnight, and again and again I looked out to make sure that all was safe. The wine-shop was still lit up, but the man in it was asleep with his head resting on his arms. Perhaps he was a spy feigning slumber, and I slipped out of

the window again to make sure. He did not move; and, reassured, I climbed back and waited in comparative peace of mind. At last the clock struck twelve, and punctual to the moment the men were beneath our room with a stretcher which they had borrowed from the sexton—ominous association—who had been a great friend of the late *curé*. We received the stretcher through the window and tenderly placed the mother and child on it, covering the latter so as to conceal him entirely. We had arranged that the men should go on alone with their precious burden; and if they should be stopped by a patrol and questioned, they were to say they were taking a woman to the hospital. I was to wait behind, and half an hour later to go by a short cut, with Mlle. Bouveron to guide me, to join them near the frontier. You can imagine how I felt when, after lowering the stretcher from the window to the men below, I watched them carry it away, feeling that I might perhaps never see my dear ones again. But God is merciful; and as there are no walls round the town it was not very difficult, when the start was once made, to get away. Mlle. Bouveron and I crept through silent streets and a deserted garden, and found Henriette and her escort at the place agreed upon, and very soon afterwards we were safe in Switzerland—our protector, from whom we had taken a warm farewell, gazing after us until we were out of sight. The next day we were happily settled in a little Swiss village, and although all the doctors I have told about our escape declare it was a wonder your mother survived the journey, she took no harm, but rapidly recovered her strength. Neither were you any the worse; and great indeed was my happiness as I watched my beloved wife with her child in her arms, both full of life and likely to be spared to me for

many years. My apparently mad enterprise had succeeded, and I could never thank God enough.

I have been looking again at the "Nativity," and have passed once more in imagination through the terrible hours of that awful Christmas Eve, 1793. Often and often I still pray for the souls of the five devoted friends who paid with their lives for their goodness to us. First Dr. Couturier, then Mlle. Bouveron and Mère Poirier, and finally Jean Nadaud and Louis Fauverteix, the bearers of the stretcher, were condemned, Raillard wreaking his vengeance on them when he found his prey had eluded him. His strangely distorted conscience made him look upon his own weakness in not having arrested me as soon as he found out who I was, as a kind of treason to the nation, and he mercilessly imprisoned, tried, and executed his fellow-doctor, and even his wife's foster-sister, as a kind of expiation for what he considered his own crime. I include his name in my prayers, too, sometimes, because of this very weakness of his, and also because of his undoubted sincerity. I should, it is true, have sent him to the scaffold on which, as a matter of fact, he met his fate after the fall of Robespierre; but in condemning him I should not have despised him, nor do I despise him even now. Probably I am the only person in the world to feel towards him as I do. His memory is simply execrated, not only at Morteau, but in the whole district of Doubs; and when, after my return from exile, I revisited the scene of our adventures his name was still only mentioned with horror. I went back in the hope of finding some trace of those who had helped us in our terrible straits, and learned how they had all perished. All I discovered was the picture of the "Nativity," which the son of Mme. Poirier had inherited from her, and, being very poor, he was will-



ing to sell it to me. You, my son, must look upon it as a heirloom, and never let it go out of the family. I have had copies made of it for my younger children. Once more I impress on you that but for it I might

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have been a murderer and have taken my own life. May it bring to you the same faith in Providence and resignation to the will of God that it did to your father!

*Paul Bourget.*

## THE CHILDHOOD OF ANIMALS.

It is a very happy thought that has led Dr. Chalmers Mitchell to make the childhood of animals the subject of his lectures to children at the London Institution. We have no fear that the spontaneity of youth will be interfered with by this objective presentation of the phenomenon of being young. There has always been a close freemasonry between the human young and anything else whatever possessing the golden dower of youth. The amount of mauling that a small kitten or puppy will stand at the chubby hands of a child is only less wonderful than the forlornness of the four-legged pet when the two-legged tormentor is absent, and its eagerness to submit itself to the torture again. The big dog, not half so grown-up as he appears to be, though he will stand no nonsense from a man, will submit to all sorts of indignity from a child, and will join him in mischief against the common enemy, human fossildom. The alligator, presented by Dr. Chalmers Mitchell as the only Peter Pan, because he is always enlarging physically, is by no means the only Peter Pan known to investigators from a more sympathetic level.

It is probably safe to assert that the microbe is cut off from the privilege of being young. It is nothing but the cast limb of a hoary antique tree. Investigators have, however, seen startling things even under the microscope. One of them, not long ago, saw an "eel" in a drop of vinegar wear itself out with endeavor to save another that

had stranded on the drying marge. If the chemist finds qualities of youth in "nascent" oxygen, and the spectroscope registers novel stripes from a new-born star, it scarcely rests with a biologist to deny youth to the microbe. On the other hand, we can detect none of the outward indications of youngness in far higher organisms, such as the caterpillar or butterfly, bee, or beetle. The insect does not seem to be born till it is free of the chrysalis. Who can doubt that the peacock butterfly has a special enjoyment of the early days of its winged existence? The hive bee celebrates its emergence from the cell by an exuberant dance of joy. The other bees tolerantly make room for it, perhaps with some vague memory of their own youth. The dance lasts for scarcely half a minute, and then the young bee settles down to the hardest round of toil that animal creation knows.

We cannot be certain that young fish play. An alevin, with a yolk as large as itself hanging from it, could scarcely be expected to feel much of the joy of youth. But the shoals of tiny dace or perch that alternately poke nose by nose into some dreaded locality, then flash all their silver sides as they turn and race away, give all the appearance of playing the game known to us as "Tom Tiddler's Ground." But then all things in flocks seem to play, just as snowflakes seem to flurry when they are really falling steadily. We can never lose the impression that a regi-

ment of soldiers marching in long lines, with one leg gaily striped, must be doing it for the sheer fun of the thing. We may be just as wrong when we think that the peewits and starlings enjoy their wonderful evolutions on the wing. The grilse that leaps bodily from the water to fall at full length with a resounding splash might be thought to be doing it "for a lark," but heartless common-sense tells us that it is his method of ridding himself of parasites. The quaintly erratic zig-zagging of the young flounders may be dictated only by the instinct to baffle their enemies. Surely the porpoise plays, when in hundreds it follows the ship for miles, jumping the waves like hurdles. But the porpoise, of course, is no more a fish than the seal or the whale.

If on the whole we must deny the joy of being young to the insect and the fish, the amphibian and the reptile, surely we may claim it for the whole of warm-blooded creation? We can at any rate see a vast field wherein it is universal. We doubt whether it belongs so richly to our nearest collaterals, the apes, as to the families of the cat and dog, though it is true that the chimpanzee is the only one capable of a passable imitation of the human smile. The playfulness of the kitten and the puppy are undoubted. It may have been very slightly increased by long association with man, but it is certainly shared in a very full sense by all the members of the feline and canine family. They are all beasts of prey, and their gambols are closely directed to increasing the suppleness and swiftness that will stand them in good stead when they are grown up. Their subordinates in creation are not nearly so playful, as it seems, because the game of being eaten is not so amusing as the game of eating. The children of Paris during the Revolution made miniature guillotines,

on which they executed mice. That game, we imagine, was not so popular with young aristocrats as with those belonging to the guillotining class. The games of cattle are not so much games of running away as games of fighting. They help the growth of horn, and prepare for the time when the single martial joy of fighting a fellow for a mate will be theirs. The callisthenics of lambs are more general and interesting, because directed to a larger purpose in grown life. Their favorite games are "King of the Castle" and "Follow my Leader," the latter being played over the roughest country of tree-trunk and precipice to be found in an ordinary meadow. It gives them a sureness of footing and an accuracy of spring that are not in the least needed by the fat ewes and wethers into which they will grow, but which were the first considerations of life in their mountain ancestors.

Ignoble speed without special agility is very little practised by the young. Little squirrels are immensely playful, but then there must be very real fun in scampering up tree-trunks and jumping from bough to bough. The fearsome life of the rabbit derives some zest from the system of scouts, sentinels, and danger-signals they employ, and the young rabbits are eager imitators of all these in their games. It seems a pleasure to them to find or imagine a danger that they can crane at and stamp their baby feet at, they know not why. The writer does not know much about the games of hares, but he would be surprised to learn that they tend to the long-winded speed on which the adult often depends for its life. Cowper's hares gambolled like young fawns. Surly "Old Tinny" would "swing his rump around," and "Bess," the courageous and independent one, who died soon after he was full-grown, "was always superior to the rest and proved himself the Vestris of

the party." The hare in its youthful games learns how to leap and turn, but probably not how to course, but the foal, whose speed is to be of a nobler kind, plays galloping games. He seems to know perfectly well that his neck is to be "clothed with thunder" (though, in fact, it is as yet covered with ridiculous curls), and the drumming of his highly specialized feet on "the hollow bosom of the earth" is an undoubted delight to him.

Is there something in the grip of the earth that makes for play? One would think that no creature would be more inclined to indulge in pure phantasy of movement than the young bird that has just got its wings. Yet it may be doubted whether a single good instance can be shown of the sportiveness of young birds. The parents have often a good deal of difficulty in getting them to learn to fly, and as soon as they are out of the nest they are quite content to sit still and scream for food to be brought to them. When they can fly well, they take it quite as a matter of course that they can reach to a hair's-breadth the perch they aim at, and generally go unerringly where they want to go. And they never want to go anywhere for the mere sake of going there or to perform any difficult evolution just for the sake of practice. When they have got their adult plumage and their sexual force, they

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usually become playful enough. The dove towers and planes because the other dove he is courting likes to see him do it, or because the full tide of life in him urges it. The rook develops all his powers of flight without games or practice, goes soberly through the winter, and then indulges in "break-backing" and the dropping and catching of acorns, because he is in love. And so all the games of birds are love games. In their neglect of their splendid opportunities of youthful play they seem to show their affinity to the reptiles from which biologists ruthlessly derive them.

We shall not know whether it is the soul or the body that is young. Perhaps the *anima* of the cat is perfectly serious. It is engaged in killing a mouse, but the baby eyes with which it is burdened cannot tell the difference between a mouse and a cotton reel; its baby paws cannot carry out the design of the ego, even the will is a baby one far beneath the needs of the real cat. If this is the kind of tragedy that is going on behind the mask of childhood, there is no play at all, or, at any rate, the grown-up who tries to talk to youth of play is talking so much Greek. One child asked Dr. Mitchell if he could not arrange for boys and girls to be caterpillars. "It would be much better fun," she said.

## MR. LABOUCHERE.

Few men, who have occupied no official position, filled so large a space in the public eye as Mr. Labouchere. He was indeed a rare combination of opposites. Belonging by birth to the upper class, and inheriting a large share in a Lancashire bank, he was an irreclaimable Bohemian and an advanced Radical. There is always something attractive about a man who, having

been educated at Eton and Cambridge, and drawing £10,000 a year from bank shares, turns his back upon "the perfumed chambers of the great," and chooses to live with actors, journalists, and republicans. He seems to have a leg in both worlds, and while he retails to mortals the scandal of Olympus, he is thought to speak what he knows. If to this mode of life such a man add

the fearless denunciation, by tongue and pen, of abuses in high and low places, the attraction becomes influence and popularity. Sir Francis Burdett played this game very well at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and Mr. Labouchere played it even better at its close, for he did not, like Sir Francis Burdett, turn Tory in his old age. The Laboucheres (whether of Huguenot origin or not) have been great people in the high finance of Amsterdam and in society at The Hague for more than a century, and are still the leading house of bankers and financiers in Holland. The late member for Northampton eschewed the national and family trade of banking (except as a shareholder), and began life in the diplomatic service, where he was a thorn in the side of the Foreign Office. For Henry Labouchere was a born rebel; he could no more help being an Ishmael than he could help his decidedly Dutch physiognomy. His mind was of that irreverent, inquiring order, which takes nothing for granted, and frequently assumes that everything established is an imposture. The exposure of humbugs and swindlers in all walks became the passion of Mr. Labouchere's life, and he undoubtedly rendered very great service to society, at considerable personal expense. There was not a begging-letter writer, or a bucket-shop keeper, or an extortionate moneylender, or a religious quack, or a fraudulent company promoter, or a purveyor of obscenity in any guise, who did not await the weekly issue of "Truth" with rage and trembling. As an exposé of fraud Mr. Labouchere must have disbursed large sums, though we have no doubt the circulation of his paper recouped him. But innumerable libel actions are not defended for nothing, and there must have been a large detective staff, for information, as Lord Salisbury once said of our secret service fund, is en-

tirely a question of money. Nor should it be forgotten in an enumeration of his services to the public, that we owe it to Mr. Labouchere that Constitution Hill is now a public thoroughfare. "The courage of the man," as we once heard a speaker in Hyde Park exclaim, "in fighting the Queen and all the big-wigs to open Constitution Hill!" We are not aware that society has ever shown the smallest gratitude to Mr. Labouchere: but we shall be surprised if the "tardy bust," in some form or other, is not, *more nostro*, raised to "buried merit." When we turn from the assailant of abuses and the terror of evil-doers to the political journalist and member of Parliament, the record is blurred by extravagance and rabid partisanship. It is impossible that so clear-headed a man of the world as Mr. Labouchere can have believed all that he used to say and write of the Tory leaders. He once accused Lord Salisbury of helping a titled criminal to escape from a warrant, and of telling a lie to cover his connivance. He was, of course, instantly suspended by the Speaker, and it is more than probable that the ebullition was calculated. This was not the only time that Mr. Labouchere offended the taste of the House of Commons, for in 1881, when Mr. Gladstone pronounced a funeral eulogy on Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Labouchere's attack on the policy and career of the dead statesman was drowned by murmurs from all sides. With these two exceptions, Mr. Labouchere managed very tactfully to assert the most violent opinions without making enemies of his brother members. There are many journalists in the House of Commons to-day, some of whom earn their living by turning their colleagues into ridicule—a gross abuse of the freemasonry of Parliament. Mr. Labouchere was too well-bred, as well as too good-natured, to make this mistake. The leaders on both sides

Mr. Labouchere considered fair game, but he never attacked private members, however prominent or obnoxious. Like Abraham Lincoln, he had a weakness for repeating or inventing coarse stories, which were not always amusing, but made him a favorite of the smoking-room. This was the most exasperating as he was a really witty man. On the floor of the House of Commons "the Christian member for Northampton" made no effect whatever. His speeches were as a rule merely *réchauffés* of his articles in "Truth," delivered in a languid drawl with the aid of bits of paper, which he dropped one by one into his hat after use. He once told the writer that he spoke to the reporters, and regarded his fellow-members as rows of lay figures. "Until you get into that frame of mind," he said kindly enough to a youngster not of his own side, "you will never succeed in politics." But it was with a stilo in his hand, and a cigarette-holder in his mouth that Mr. Labouchere became great. The editor of "Truth" has never got credit for the real excellence of his prose style, simply because no one expects to meet with first-rate English in a society weekly. Mr. Labouchere used to write a great deal in his paper twenty-five years ago, sometimes "notes" and sometimes leaders. Though unsigned, his "copy" was unmistakable. In directness, in simplicity, in terseness of wit and humor, Mr. Labouchere's prose was Voltairean: it was better than Cobbett's, for that great master of journalism spoiled his effects by exaggeration and violent vituperation. Good writing is so rare in the English press that it is a thousand pities these articles should be lost.

Mr. Labouchere had another conspicuous foible: in the words of a French moralist, "*il faisait une fan-faronnade des vices, dont il n'était pas capable.*" He took so low a view of his fellows that out of mere good-fellowship he

was bound to make himself out as bad as he conceived them to be, or rather worse. Once, after a rubber was over, his partner pointed out that his play, though successful, was extremely risky, as the adversary might have held such-and-such a card. "I agree," said Labouchere, "but then I took the precaution of looking over my adversary's hand." When he was City editor of the "World" (his first essay in journalism), he tried operating on the Stock Exchange, and to help his speculation would write up the shares of which he was a bull, and write down the shares of which he was a bear. After he was caught at these manoeuvres by the publication of some letters never intended for the light of day, Labouchere blandly asked, "What greater proof can I give of my belief in the shares I write up than buying them? Or what stronger evidence can there be of my disbelief in a share than my selling it?" He soon gave up speculating, however, being much too clever not to realize that he could not play against the professional financiers. In the Home Rule days, between 1886 and 1895, Mr. Labouchere was plunged in intrigue, and it was he who first saw through Pigott, and induced the forger to confess to Sir George Lewis and himself, by what means is not yet known. What is almost incredible, but is apparently true, is that this clear-sighted cynic, this laughing philosopher, who wrote himself down an unprincipled trifler, was really disappointed because Mr. Gladstone did not ask him to join his Cabinet in 1892, and genuinely offended because he was not, in the alternative, sent as ambassador to Washington! Such are the "follies of the wise"! Labouchere was what our neighbors used to call "*très fin du siècle*"; he was a very clever and amusing personality, whose withdrawal from politics and journalism left us all sadder men.



## INSULT AS A FINE ART.

An injury, it is said, is sooner forgotten than an insult. We all know this to be true, nor is the reason obscure; the human mind resents most powerfully that kind of offence which is vague, subtle, and difficult of proof. The mind reads continually into the indefinite new meanings and new accusations and ponders upon their foundations. An injury, such as the infliction of pecuniary loss or a wound, is measurable and may be easily put out of the memory when the inconvenience or bitterness is past. An insult, even when small, is almost inexhaustible because it breeds suspicion. We do not know what motive may lie behind it; often we are not even sure whether an insult has been intended. An insult may be embodied in a look, an intonation, a gesture. Who shall produce proof in what must always be a matter of intention? When insult shapes itself into perfect definiteness it is an affair for the Courts, and you may take action for libel or slander. But insult of the common intangible kind provokes in response all the variations of temperament of which men and races are capable. The Durbar at Delhi has set the world talking of an insult which was said to have been offered by the Gaekwar of Baroda to the King. How difficult to *prove* whether what seemed a studied indifference in rendering homage was really deliberate! It appeared to onlookers to be unmistakably so, but the Gaekwar when charged with insolence apologized fully and explained his behavior.

Apology is the only remedy for insult; and it is one of the great opportunities for self-recommendation; for every one of sensibility and humanity likes the person who is generous and frank enough to remove misunderstanding at his own cost. Yet how often

pride stands in the way of sincere apology! Strangest of paradoxes that the simplest method of earning a reputation for candor and moral courage should be persistently ignored in favor of the doubtful satisfaction of deluding oneself with the argument that so long as an apology has not been offered none has been really needed! Apology is the rarest of solvents, not only because few people can apologize gracefully, but because apology is seldom requested. It is of the nature of insult that it should not justify requests for apology. To exact amends for an insult which it may be said was never intended would be in itself an offer of insult.

True nobility ignores insult. It appears to be unconscious of it. It is overtly incapable of receiving it. In no matter is a man more clearly seen to be a gentleman or the reverse than in his treatment of insult. But to the gentlemanlike rule that insult should not be recognized there is one great exception. It is when insult is offered through a person to a cause or an institution. When the Gaekwar of Baroda appeared to insult the King an apology was exacted, not because the King could not afford to act on a sound rule like other people, but because the slight seemed to be directed to the institution of British sovereignty in India. For that reason it was rightly held that the Gaekwar's conduct could not be ignored. We have heard it related that on a State occasion in Austria an archduke suffered from the insults of a well-known man who kicked the archduke's boot whenever he passed him. The archduke had no doubt in his mind that an insult was intended, but he could not prove it, and as sovereignty was not directly attacked in his person he preferred not

to recognize the insult. "What a clumsy person!" was all that he muttered whenever his enemy stumbled fiercely across his boot.

If a retort to an insult is ever to be effective—and no doubt the rule of silence may have its exceptions—it must flash back like a gunshot and kill like a gun; it must have wit or a supreme readiness. There is a story that in the seventeenth century an ambassador of the Persian Emperor visited the Great Moghul. The ambassador was instructed not to demean his mighty master by bowing before the Moghul. The courtiers of the Moghul, knowing this, arranged the approach to the throne so that the ambassador would have to pass under a low wooden decorative arch. There he would be compelled to bow or he could not get through. The ambassador on coming to the arch turned round and backed through, with his head away from the throne. "He comes through like a donkey!" was the neat aside of the Moghul; but it was capped and bettered by that of the plenipotentiary: "The only proper way in a stable of mules!" Ingenuousness—if it be not indeed the feigned ingenuousness of wit—may sometimes withdraw the sting of an insult. Whistler feigned ingenuousness in one of his letters reprinted in the "Gentle Art of Making Enemies." He had written, it appears, of some painter that he was a kind of Blank and Blank, naming a well-known press-cutting firm. The firm asked for an apology; the comparison was likely to bring their highly valuable services into contempt. "You absurd people," replied Whistler innocently, "you don't mean to say you really exist!" He had always thought that the name was a kind of symbol for the sort of thing he had derided, and behold in shooting at a dummy he had brought down a real man! Similarly—was this a case of real ingenuousness?—a young lady in a

foreign country found herself threatened with legal proceedings because she had addressed a letter, ordering some cloth, to "The Brigand of the Marches" at a certain town where the goods were sold. The shopman to whom the letter was duly delivered (for "The Brigand of the Marches" was, indeed, his familiar, though doubtless quite undeserved, nickname) protested that the direction on the letter was calculated to bring him into derision and do injury to his business. He demanded a full apology. "Monsieur," wrote the alarmed young lady, "I am extremely sorry that I made a mistake in addressing you as 'The Brigand of the Marches.' Having never heard you spoken of under any other name I presumed that it was the sign of your shop. I should greatly regret it if I did you an injury. You are, of course, quite at liberty to make any use you like of this letter."

But, as we have implied, such instances are dangerous precedents. Bacon says of revenge what may be said with equal truth of dealing with insult: "Certainly in taking revenge a man is but even with his enemy, but in passing it over he is superior; for it is a prince's part to pardon; and Solomon, I am sure, saith, *It is the glory of a man to pass by an offence.*" He who studies insult, like him who studies revenge, "keeps his wounds green." Bacon distinguishes between public and private revenge, as we have distinguished between impersonal and personal insult. Revenge, he says, was taken successfully for the deaths of Cæsar, Pertinax, and Henry III. of France. "But in private revenges it is not so. Nay, rather, vindictive persons live the life of witches, who, as they are mischievous, so end they infortunate."

The gestures of the Latin races and the great range of intonation—perhaps the same thing is true of the Celtic part of the British people as compared

with the Teutonic—are a facile vehicle for insult. Insults hang sequestered in the movements of the eyes and the fingers. The Frenchman is temperamentally disinclined to ignore what he thinks he clearly perceives. The writer recalls a conversation with a Frenchman who argued that it is impossible for Englishmen to preserve their honor, since they do not fight duels. Each imagined case of insult mentioned in the conversation was examined on its merits. "Yes, that is all very well," the Frenchman would say, "but suppose a man spits at you, what then? That cannot be ignored. You cannot honorably do nothing then." To this fearful crux he repeatedly returned. The English rejoinder that the case never arises seemed to him as unsatisfactory.

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factory as it would seem to most of us adequate. Among Englishmen it is felt to be unprofitable to insult those who are unlikely to wince. It is reserved rather for uneducated people here to try with insult to lacerate their victim's feelings. It is a common trick to create suspicion by conveying discreditable tales about near relations or dear friends—"anything to give pain," in fact, as Michael genially says in the "Wrong Box." When insult is practised on one who passes it over as a gentleman should, the author of the insult must enjoy the effects by faith. The faith of the malicious is very weak. They prefer plainer returns. Therefore to ignore insult is generally to defeat it.

## TO NINETEEN HUNDRED AND TWELVE.

Good Year, you have indeed your work cut out!

I cannot (at the moment) call to mind

A programme more exhausting; nay, I doubt

If any previous brace of years combined

Have had their sense of duty

Confronted by a task so strangely fruity.

There is the coal strike. As I understand,

Our miners claim an equal minim wage

Both for the honest and the idle hand,

And, by the bonds of brotherhood, engage

To starve their fellow-tollers

By cutting off the wherewithal of boilers.

Our cellars will be bare, our railways cease,

No gas will issue when we turn the tap.

The Teutons, when they note, in time of peace,

Our *Dreadnoughts* made equivalent to scrap,

Will come, with none to fight 'em,

And spoil our golf-links. That is one small item.

Should we survive it, there are plenty more:

There is the Act of Union to be broke;

There's Ulster pleading for a taste of gore,

And Taffy's finger in his Church's poke;

And Manhood Suffrage showing

His hydra-head. These ought to keep you going.

And there's the Women's Vote: on rival planks  
 Tub-thumping Ministers will disagree;  
 And doctors, closing up their learned ranks,  
 Refuse to operate for housemaid's knee—  
 (*Lloyd George's* little measure  
 Alone should occupy your autumn leisure).

In other lands you'll find the same unrest.  
 Where'er the heathen tries to mend his ways,  
 Down swoops the Christian on his vulture quest;  
 Or, should Reform be checked by long delays  
 (As with the casual Persian),  
 Two Christian vultures join in this diversion.

The sombre East is out to sack and slay;  
 Along the Libyan shore there lies the Turk,  
 "Butchered to make a Roman holiday,"  
 And still Bellona asks for more red work;  
 Still half the world indulges  
 In more, and bigger, armamentary bulges.

Then there is France, the gay and volatile,  
 Swapping her Cabinets in middle stream;  
 And Germany, that watches all the while,  
 Doping with jingo drugs her restive team;  
 And every sort of trouble  
 Waiting to burst inside the Balkan bubble.

Thus, if you've followed my remarks, you'll know  
 The gods would have you play a heavy part.  
 But take your time: don't you be pressed: go slow,  
 With smiling face to hide a serious heart;  
 Good! pull yourself together,  
 And you'll get through with luck—and decent weather.

*Owen Seaman.*

*Punch.*

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Professor Herbert A. Giles's outline of "The Civilization of China," in the "Home University Library" (Henry Holt & Co.) is especially timely just now when the changes which are taking place in China, with kaleidoscopic rapidity are engaging the world's attention, but it would have been delightful and illuminating reading at any time, so graphic and compact is the account which it gives of Chinese

customs and institutions. The author writes not only out of abundant scholarship but from personal observation. He has in a high degree the faculty of condensation without any loss of picturesqueness; and his little book, which may easily be read through in a couple of hours, will leave the average reader a comfortable sense of knowing more about China and the Chinese than he ever knew before, and of being a re-

pository of information for others less enlightened.

Prof. William Witherlie Lawrence of Columbia lectured on ancient myths under the Hewitt Foundation for 1911. He has gathered his studies in a book, confessing frankly that they were intended for a popular audience and therefore have been pitched on a lower plane than he would use for a more scholarly crowd of listeners. He hardly needs the apology for "Medieval Story" since, though cast in a popular mold, the whole presents a profound theory of the myth as following the development of Democracy. He studies Beowulf, which has no sense of a native land; Roland, which is all patriotism; The Arthurian Romances, the beginnings of Social Righteousness; The Holy Grail, the unpractical idealism of the nobility; Reynard and Robin Hood, the practical democracy of the peasants; The Canterbury Tales, Democracy at its first raw beginnings. He certainly expounds his theory well and convincingly. The Columbia University Press.

"The Wrong Woman," by Charles D. Stewart, is written in a leisurely style that will charm and delight. At the start, the situation is most original; Janet Smith sets out across the Texas prairies to take an examination for a teacher's certificate, loses her way, and finds shelter in a sheep ranch, where she is protected by the hero of the story, Steve Brown. Another attempt to reach the county seat results in a circling course which leads Janet to the ranch again. As to plot, the book is really nothing more than an episode, with clever character drawing of people in a small Texas town. The chief charm lies in the descriptions of sheep farming, and there are many deliciously amusing bits about lambs and their ways. Not stirring, nor very strong,

there is yet a freshness throughout the entire story. The situations are never intense; even the flutter among the Texan housewives fails to impress the reader very seriously, and he has a comfortable assurance that all is happy and well. The book will fit certain moods excellently. Houghton Mifflin Company.

Eight of the promised forty volumes of the new "Tudor Shakespeare" have now been published by the Macmillan Company. These are *Romeo and Juliet*, the first Part of *Henry IV*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Coriolanus*, *As You Like It*, the first Part of *Henry VI* and *Henry V*. The series is under the general editorship of Professor William Allan Neilson of Harvard University and Professor Ashley Horace Thorndike of Columbia University, and the text used is the copyrighted Neilson text. The distinguishing feature of the series is that each of the plays is under the special editorship of an American Shakespeare scholar,—a plan which ensures a wider scope of study and exposition than that adopted in many editions of Shakespeare, in which the work is that of a single editor. *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, is edited by the general editors: *The Merchant of Venice* by Professor Ayres of Columbia University; *As You Like It* by Professor Shackford of Wellesley College, etc. But the general plan is the same. Each play is furnished with a brief historical and critical introduction, notes, a glossary and a list of variant readings. The dainty volumes, clearly and attractively printed, bound in green cloth with gilt top, with decorative end-papers and a photogravure frontispiece, are certain to be as alluring to school and college students as to the general reader. They are of a size to slip easily into the pocket; and, altogether, they are a marvel of cheapness and beauty.